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ABSTRACT

The seven papers in this monograph focus on defining and assessing quality. The paper are: (1) "Reflections on Design Ideals" (E. Grady Bogue), which addresses some "governing ideals" of collegiate quality; (2) "Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Investment and Quality in Higher Education" (Sven Groennings), which sees the competitive quality of educational performance as the "rock," and the deteriorating financial situation as the "hard place"; (3) "Barriers to Quality" (Manning M. Pattillo, Jr.), which charges that admission standards of many institutions are not conducive to raising educational standards in a competitive environment; (4) "Assessing Quality in Academic Programs" (Libby V. Morris), which argues that improving the quality of academic programs requires reinstatement of the importance of general education, reexamining the relationship of professional competence and societal expectations, and distinguishing between program quality and faculty quality; (5) "Quality on Two Fronts: Undergraduate Education for the Future" (Susan H. Frost and Ronald D. Simpson), which finds many positive changes taking place in American colleges and universities; (6) "After Quality, What Else?" (Alton Taylor), which raises the question of what else is needed after we have defined, assessed and obtained quality; and (7) "Quality and Diversity: The Mystique of Process" (Cameron Fincher), which raises questions about the conflicting purposes of quality and diversity. (Most papers contain references.) (SM)

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DEFINING AND ASSESSING QUALITY

Papers Presented at an Invitational Seminar

Cameron Fincher
Editor

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Cameron Fincher (Editor)

Institute of Higher Education • The University of Georgia
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Foreword

The following papers on defining and assessing educational quality were written and presented at an invitational seminar on March 1-2, 1993. The publication of Grady Bogue and Bob Saunders' book on *The Evidence for Quality* initiated the planning, and the availability of Grady Bogue, Sven Groennings, and the Georgia Center for Continuing Education on the same dates implemented the plan. Our timing could not have been better.

Indeed, our invitational seminar was but one among many conferences, colloquia, or symposia (in 1993) dealing with educational quality. The word *quality* was used frequently and almost incessantly by businessmen, government officials, educators, and the news media. Any good dictionary will give several definitions, but popular usage gave the word an accusatorial ring. Whatever *quality* might be, it was something that education is failing to deliver.

Concurrent with the many efforts to assess educational outcomes, college and university campuses were beseeched to internationalize their undergraduate curricula, to cast aside the "cultural biases" of rationality, science, and technology, and to embrace new cultural perspectives in the form of poststructuralism or postmodernism. Pluralism and diversity, once familiar terms, were debated in terms that proclaimed the "validity" of all cultural values and insisted on public approbation. Never before have so many strident voices been heard in academic corridors and never before has there been so little effort to reconcile differences of opinions.

Considering the intense pressures upon colleges and universities to assess educational outcomes and to be accountable to their various constituencies, an invitational seminar on defining and assessing quality made *good* sense. The seminar was well attended, and the receptivity of invited participants to the papers was quite commendable. Unfortunately for readers, the publication of the papers has been delayed by the "inconsistent *quality* of updated software" and other demands on staff time. The timeliness of publication cannot match, therefore, the relevance of the papers to the issues they discuss.

In the first of two keynote presentations, Grady Bogue addresses the "governing ideals" of collegiate quality. Academic leaders make many conventional assumptions about the quality of colleges and they acquiesce too often to judgments of quality that are publicized by the news media. Bogue would define quality in terms of missions (their specification) and goals (their achievement). The assessment of quality should follow satisfactory answers to questions concerning distinctions in missions, evidence of improvement, linkage to teaching and learning, external standards, the multiplicity of evidence, and our various perspectives on quality. In commending such "governing ideals" to institutional leaders, Bogue would encourage more "curiosity about the nature and nurture of quality . . . and stimulate an action agenda of caring and daring."

In his keynote paper, Sven Groennings identifies the competitive quality of our educational performance as "a rock" and our deteriorating financial situation as "a hard place." National prosperity increases with the quality of educational achievement, but our national leaders have not properly linked educational and economic competitiveness in our global economy." Since 80 percent of the value of our goods and services depends upon the competencies of our workforce, educational

quality must be improved. To invest more wisely in our global knowledge economy, Groennings would articulate a public philosophy reflecting change, encourage more innovation, assign a higher priority to teacher education, define and improve productivity, and build a stronger case for investment in the development of human resources. At all levels educational investment should be linked to educational reform *and* quality.

Manning Pattillo's discussion of "barriers to quality" should be required reading for everyone who would propose solutions to educational problems. The admission standards of many institutions are *not* conducive to the raising of educational standards in a competitive society. Higher education *is* a part-time enterprize for too many students, faculty members, and academic leaders. No one will argue consistently that "Big-Time" athletics is fully compatible with improved standards of quality. And no one should deny current threats to academic freedom in "political correctness," and the many other forces that politicize higher education.

In her discussion of academic programs, Libby Morris reminds us that quality in education has often been questioned. Poor instruction, lack of unity in general education, and deficiencies in language, values, and citizenship have been criticized in the past, as well as the present. If assessment alone could bring about curricular reform, our programs in the health professions would be an exemplary model. "Sadly," she writes, "the creation of a highly specialized health professional may not equate to a better individual, a better citizen, or a better overall profession." To improve the quality of academic programs, we must reinstate the importance of general education, reexamine the relationship of professional competence and societal expectations, distinguish between program quality and faculty quality — and engage our faculties more actively in public service.

Susan Frost and Ron Simpson, in writing their book on undergraduate education, found many positive changes taking place in American colleges and universities. They cite and quote institutional leaders who view recent changes with less alarm than many critics have. They see individuals who create new learning opportunities and institutions that are capable of redefining their respective missions. The relative importance of teaching is "beginning to change," technological advances "make possible new roles," and college classrooms are but one of the places in which students can and do learn. Frost and Simpson are encouraged by the efforts of academic communities to redress "their relationships to each other and to the larger world." They are quite aware of many unanswered questions, but they detect convergence in the responsibilities of individuals and institutions for "learning and learning to learn."

Alton Taylor, in his paper, raises a question that many of us would ignore. After we define, assess, and obtain quality, what else will we need? "The ultimate test of quality," he writes, "is found in the procedures through which it works." In academe all such procedures involve faculty members who will not respond to "the cheerleading approach" used in the improvement of quality. However defined and assessed, quality will take "different shapes between the academic and nonacademic dimensions of colleges and universities." Accountability is markedly different "in terms of measurement and evaluation processes and policies." As a result, new management approaches are not received enthusiastically in "the independent, spirited, and inquisitive scholar's world."

The concluding paper raises many questions about the conflicting purposes of quality and diversity, as the two concepts, principles, or "movements" are discussed in the 1990s. In higher education we have long debated

the relative merits of institutional efficiency and effectiveness. Many of us have been aware that our models of the two can be reduced to basic forms. Efficiency, as a ratio of outputs and inputs, and effectiveness, as a ratio of purposes and performance, should serve us well as measures of quality, but they do not. Too many of us are unwilling to recognize that we often reject efficiency as impractical, if not irrelevant, and we righteously insist that effectiveness is obvious to those who will but look in the right direction. More often than not, we demonstrate neither efficiency nor effectiveness to our critics.

With apologies for the delay in publication, the Institute staff and I are pleased to make following papers available to a larger audience. Our invitational seminar did not result in definitive statements or assessable outcomes, but it did (and it has continued to) stimulate the kind of curiosity Grady Bogue mentioned as his opening paper. We trust that we can pass that curiosity to our readers.

Cameron Fincher
March 16, 1994

Reflections on Design Ideals

E. Grady Bogue

In his engaging little book, *Leadership is an Art*, Max Depree offers what may be the most concise yet substantive definition of leadership role that I've encountered. "The first responsibility of a leader," Depree says, "is to define reality. The last is to say thank you" (1989, p. 9). Volumes of empirical and philosophical scholarship are here subsumed in a couple of lines. Can anyone of us not believe that we might be more effective in our leadership responsibilities if we affirmed in belief and behavior this view of role?

Now if I may attend to one additional view on the concept of leadership role, I will link these quickly to the topic of collegiate quality. In *The Fifth Discipline*, Peter Senge (1990) suggests a tripartite role for leaders: designer, steward, teacher. I like these three perspectives, but I am particularly drawn to the idea of leader as designer. Does this vision of role not connect nicely with the leader as a definer of reality? Definers and designers — not a bad headline for the work of leaders in any enterprise, corporate or collegiate.

What I intend in these reflections is to examine those principles of design that associate with the idea of collegiate quality, for our design principles will in fact lead yield forms of quality reality. I begin with an exploration of some well known design principles, some perhaps needing consignment to the museum of outdated ideas. As the discussion unfolds, I hope that we might uncover more appropriate design ideals, what I shall refer to as the "governing ideals" of collegiate quality.

A Conventional and Confining Model

Conventional assumptions about collegiate quality often appear in the conversations of academic leaders, board members, and civic leaders. Consider, for example, the following:

- Only high cost colleges have quality.
- Only large and comprehensive colleges have quality.
- Only highly selective colleges have quality.
- Only nationally recognized colleges have quality.
- Only a few colleges can have quality.
- Only colleges with impressive resources have quality.

This cluster of assumptions evokes a pyramidal image of quality. Older and larger research universities cluster at the apex. Former teachers' colleges (now universities) reside in the middle. Community colleges dominate the base. Liberal arts colleges may be sprinkled throughout this pyramidal structure, depending upon their perceived attributes. Is this pyramidal image a narrowly conceived model of collegiate quality that fosters an unnecessary and unhelpful arrogance? As *Trustees and Troubled Times in Higher Education* (1992) notes, it is a model "driven by the prestige of research," designed "to stoke academic egos instead of students' dreams" (p. 22). Let's consider a contrasting image.

Peter Senge (1990) offers this conviction: "I do not believe great organizations have ever been built by trying to emulate another, any more than individual greatness is achieved by trying to copy another 'great person'" (1990, p. 11). Under this assumption, quality results not from imitating another institution or individual, but in reaching for and discovering one's own promise and distinction, whether personal or organizational.

At the end of a seminar I teach on policy issues in quality assurance, I furnish students with a series of vignettes, thought exercises that allow them to engage in a form of "mini simulation" or role playing. In these vignettes they are asked to field a variety of questions in different settings. Curious students, anxious parents, probing newspaper reporters, aggressive search committees, dissenting colleagues, and angry board members loft questions on what accreditation really means, why their institution did not appear in *The U.S. News and World Report* rankings of "America's Best Colleges," why some departments think the institution's program review process is an empty exercise, whether total quality management is a solid philosophy or passing fad, and what implications are to be found in the state board's plan for developing statewide performance indicators for higher education.

Suppose that we carried the idea of that "thought exercise" to our fellowship here. Since we are today hosted on the campus of the University of Georgia, what response might we elicit to the question: "What evidence would the University of Georgia offer in demonstration of its quality?" Might we expect a consistency in the pattern of responses from faculty and staff from over the university? How might those of us from other institutions respond? Our evidences are symbols, are they not, of what we value. These evidences can both challenge and confine. The design of collegiate quality, then, is no small philosophical task. Our purpose is to explore a cluster of "governing ideals" that might assist in that design work.

The First Accountability

To recite here the expressions of our national concern with quality in both business and government sectors is unnecessary. This concern is equally active in the

life of American colleges and universities, as evident in review of newspapers, magazines, contemporary books, and electronic news media coverage. The current national debate on quality has opened for public and collegiate inspection a range of questions and issues:

- Is quality in limited supply? Can only a few institutions have quality?
- Is quality to be expressed in a single performance indicator or does it take more data to illuminate organizational performance?
- How can the definition and assessment of collegiate quality recognize the diversity of institutional missions and simultaneously respect meaningful performance standards?
- To what extent should information on quality be subject to public disclosure?
- Are quality and funding always linked in positive and direct correlation? What variables, other than money, directly affect the quality of programs and services?
- What is to be the primary purpose for the assessment of quality — improvement or accountability?

With the last question in mind, the question of purpose, let us begin with a story that highlights the issue of accountability and reveals what, in my mind, is the most fundamental purpose of our quest for quality.

Years ago, I remember agonizing over the performance of a graduate student, which I described in *The Evidence for Quality* (1992) as follows:

> A thirty-year old woman enrolled in a graduate course has submitted a major paper. This paper is not just grammatically incorrect; it is incoherent! Her performance in the course has been marginal on every dimension, culminating in this disappointing and heartbreaking final paper. Any reasonable standard of acceptable

> performance would not encourage a passing grade for this paper, much less for the course. It might be argued that each person contributing to the meaning of this student's bachelor's degree has committed an act of malpractice, cheating this woman of her potential and dignity. . . .
>
> How could this happen? This woman is a graduate of an institution that is regionally accredited and of a program that is professionally accredited. Think of the simplicity of attitudes and actions it would have taken to discover whether this student could write a grammatically correct sentence, a coherent paragraph, a sensible essay. Think of the prescriptive and corrective action that could and should have been taken early in her collegiate career.
>
> This example illustrates a mind left wasted, a mind left dispirited and disengaged. To know that this student has been exposed to a lower quality climate requires no great philosophical agony in defining quality nor any technological feat in measuring it. (1992, pp. 5-6)

Is not our first accountability to our students? College leaders can and should ascertain whether any campus within the circle of their care is meeting this first accountability. Conversations built on hazy and narrow notions of quality should yield to more thoughtful and substantive exchanges. Having in hand a consensus definition of quality is a helpful first step.

A Definition of Quality

Few themes have occupied the attention of such a diverse array of minds over such a long period of time as the theme of quality. Poets and philosophers, executives and employees, scholars and statesmen, those who teach and those who are taught will see that the quest for quality is an unfinished journey.

While defining quality is a first-order challenge for higher education, we should not believe that it is a challenge unique to colleges. A widely recognized writer on the corporate sector, Philip Crosby defines quality simply as "conformance to requirements" (Crosby, 1984, p. 60). A book published by the American Management Association — *I Know It When I See It: A Modern Fable About Quality* — touts customer satisfaction as the principal indicator of quality: "Customers aren't interested in our specs. They're interested in the answer to one simple question: did the product do what I expected it to do?" (Guaspari, 1985, p. 68). In his 1988 book, *Managing Quality*, David Garvin describes the multiple dimensions of quality as follows:

- Performance, the "fitness for use" test: Does the product do what the consumer wants?
- Features, the "bells and whistles" that supplement the basic functions and add competitive edge.
- Reliability: How long until first failure or service need?
- Conformance, the extent to which the product meets established specification and manufacturer standards.
- Durability, the length of product life.
- Serviceability, speed, cost, ease of repair.
- Esthetics, a highly subjective but measurable aspect of product appeal.
- Perceived quality: Is a Honda built in America perceived as a Japanese car? Of higher quality? (Garvin, 1988, pp. 49-68)

The service spirit of those who put heart and meaning into our organizations, whether corporate or collegiate, and the importance of the quality "reality" they create is nicely presented by Scandinavian Airlines President Jan Carlzon writing in *Moments of Truth*: "But if

you ask our customers about SAS, they won't tell you about our planes or our offices or the way we finance our capital investment. Instead, they talk about their experiences with the people of SAS" (Carlzon, 1987, p. 2). Think about the thousand collegiate "moments of truth" created in any week through the interaction of students with faculty and staff of our colleges and universities. Here is an important "governing ideal" of collegiate quality: It is our people, our faculty and staff, who give operational meaning to the word quality.

The man who gave impetus to the rapid enhancement of quality in Japanese industry and perhaps the most renowned and oft-quoted American authority on the issue of quality, W. Edwards Deming furnishes still another definitional priority. The first item in Deming's list of 14 points for management is to "create constancy of purpose for improvement of product and service" (Deming, 1986, p. 24). The essence of quality, from Deming's perspective, is the commitment to constant improvement — a second "governing ideal" and theme to which we will return.

What of those who have invested thought and talent in the collegiate sector of our national life? Are academic definitions of quality different from those cited for the corporate sector? There are similarities and serious points of departure. Among the leading researchers and writers in American higher education is Alexander Astin, who gives this definition of quality: "The most excellent institutions are, in this view, those that have the greatest impact — add the most value, as economists would say — on the student's knowledge and personal development and on the faculty member's scholarly and pedagogical ability and productivity" (Astin, 1985, p. 61). This definition moves away from an emphasis on size and selectivity and accents results rather than reputation.

Another statesman of American higher education is Lewis Mayhew. He and his coauthors offer a slightly different definition in *Quest for Quality*: "Quality undergraduate education consists of preparing learners though the use of words, numbers, and abstract concepts to understand, cope with, and positively influence the environment in which they find themselves" (Mayhew, Ford, and Hubbard, 1990, p. 29). This definition, while useful, fails to acknowledge the idea that education at every level in our society is a moral enterprise. Whether it acknowledges the role of passion, appropriately celebrated in such books as Peters and Austin's 1985 book, *A Passion for Excellence*, is another question. The role of passion in the nurture of quality is a matter to which we will return.

In *The Evidence for Quality* (1992), Bob Saunders and I ventured this definition: "Quality is conformance to mission specification and goal achievement — within publicly accepted standards of accountability and integrity" (p. 20). What we hoped to achieve in this definition was to recognize, respect, and reinforce the concept that there are varieties of excellence in American higher education, from Stanford University in the West to Samford University in the South, from the University of Michigan in the North to the University of Montevallo in the South, from Centenary College to Central Piedmont Community College, from the Air Force Academy to Antioch. Anyone who takes in the grand sweep of American higher education will immediately and intuitively sense the folly of the pyramidal image described earlier, an image that so often fashions our notions of quality. Varieties of excellence — this respect for diversity is another "governing ideal" essential to an effective quality assurance program.

A second aspiration was to insure that our definition of quality embraced an ethical test. Contemporary news coverage, several book length reports and critiques

on higher education, and conference themes on public trust in higher education highlight current concerns with performance integrity issues in higher education.

As examples of depressing media stories we may begin with an article appearing in the August, 1992 issue of *GQ Magazine* — a publication that would not be counted among the premier referred journals of academe and one that would not ordinarily be found among my reading material. In browsing the newsstand of my local bookstore, however, it was hard to miss the cover title of an article entitled "Magna Cum Fraud." This article carried the story of former President — and former President Emeritus! — Jim Holderman of the University of South Carolina. Indicted for using his presidential office for personal financial gain, he pleaded guilty and is now, according to media sources, also accused of making sexual advances to male students working in the office of the president.

We have experienced at least one book-length critique of American colleges and universities for each of the last six or seven years. While critiques are not new, the frequency and intensity do seem to be. Among the latest of these is Martin Anderson's *Impostors in the Temple* (1992) and Page Smith's *Killing the Spirit* (1990), though there will no doubt be another more current version by the time these lines reach public exposure. Wait, here is another flyer even as I write. This critique is by Richard Huber and is entitled *How Professors Play the Cat Guarding the Cream: Why We're Paying More and Getting Less in Higher Education*, a 1992 University Press of America release.

Not even in reading for pleasure can we escape the transition in higher education image. In Volume IV of *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research*, John Thelin and Barbara Townsend explore the relationship between college fact and college fiction, examining the novel as a source of knowledge about higher

education. Examples of the genre abound, as those who have read *The Paper Chase* (Osborn, 1971) and *The Lords of Discipline* (Conroy, 1986) can attest. Even as I sought refuge in closing out a hard day recently, I found in the mystery I was reading, Harry Kemelman's *The Day the Rabbi Resigned* (1992), a cynical (but accurate?) view of trustee responsibility: "We don't make policy, but we do have a function. We act as a kind of brake" (pp. 94-95). Two recent novels are Galbraith's *The Tenured Professor* (1990) and *Murder and the MLA*, by J.H. Jones (1993), a novel to be released in April by the University of Georgia Press. The view of professorial role portrayed by the former and promised by the latter does not correspond well with James Hilton's "Mr. Chips."

It is virtually impossible to scan any week of the "Personal and Professional" section of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* without reading there the stories of colleagues taking higher education in harm's way: a finance officer embezzling funds, a department chair falsifying enrollment data, a researcher padding both his research data and financial accounts, a graduate officer extorting financial aid funds from foreign graduate students, a fallen scholar with a plagiarized publication, a student affairs officer appearing in a sex video, academic conference sponsors engaged in false advertisement.

Thus, we have seen a pattern of unfortunate administrative and faculty behavior leading to what some commentators describe as a "loss of sanctuary" for higher education. In the eyes of some, higher education is no longer a place where "Mr. Chips" lives, a place where "lusty barbarians" are transformed into educated human beings via the caring and competent touch of artist teachers (Hilton, 1929). Though any one of these ethical abuses may be seen as an exception to a more general reality of integrity, we do not believe that quality

associates well with duplicity: We cannot claim to be nurturing quality while stealing from our institutions, our governments, and our clients.

A definition of collegiate quality, then, requires assumptions. These assumptions shape the reality in which we seek to nurture quality. For example, the belief that quality is in limited supply contradicts the idea that quality is attainable and essential to each and every campus. It argues against the idea that quality will always be related to mission and that the mission of any campus, no matter how comprehensive, will always be limited. A campus, or system of campuses, with units/programs differing in mission is understandable. A campus, or system of campuses, with "second class" units/programs is more difficult to defend.

A preference for closure and a discomfort with ambiguity might urge the selection of a "best" definition of quality from among those presented. There are, however, informing and helpful elements in each of these definitions. Astin's definition, for example, suggests that a college making no developmental contribution, no value-added contribution, to its students would hardly be considered a quality institution. Mayhew and colleagues' definition affirms that a college not equipping its graduates to cope with and positively influence the environment would hardly be considered a quality institution. Saunders and I urge that collegiate quality must be related to mission and goals, to the educational and ethical performance of the institution. The complex nature of quality requires a multifaceted approach to the assessment of quality, a matter to which we now turn.

The Assessment of Quality

Can we trust the anecdotal assertion earlier cited in the American Management Association publication: *I'll Know Quality When I See It?* Perhaps under some conditions. But we can do better than that. We can

assemble concrete and specific evidence on quality. We can, and should, know as much about our students on exit as we do on entry — about changes in their knowledge, skill, and attitudes. There are several questions that can inform and focus discussions on assessing quality:

1. How can we improve decision making? In the corporate world, we make design, production, and marketing decisions. In the collegiate world, we make decisions to implement, revise, and terminate programs, and we make decisions to admit, place, advance, suspend, and graduate students. Such decisions should be informed by assessment. A simple decision model suggests that most quality decisions in collegiate work turn on the need (a) to offer accountability support for programs and services, and (b) to support action leading to program or service improvement.

2. What indicators will we accept as evidence of quality? Earlier we noted David Garvin's citation of such factors as "fitness for use, reliability, conformance to specification, durability, etc." for use in assessing the quality of industrial products. American higher education has fashioned a wide array of evidence for quality that include these:

   - Accreditation — the test of mission and goal achievement
   - Rankings and Ratings — the test of reputation
   - Outcomes — the test of value added
   - Licensure — the test of professional standards
   - Program Reviews — the test of peer review
   - Follow-up Studies — the test of client satisfaction

   Each of these evidences has strengths and liabilities. Perhaps the oldest and best known seal of collegiate quality, accreditation is built on the premise and promise of mission integrity

and performance improvement, but it has also been accused of many imperfections — as, for example, a periodic exercise in professional back scratching. Ranking and rating studies, including the well-known *U. S. News and World Report* and media ratings of "America's Best Colleges," keep quality conversations alive, but offer little help in efforts to improve quality and are often referred to as "quantified gossip." Student satisfaction is a legitimate and essential evidence of quality; however, student satisfaction may be inversely related to quality in educational settings. A more detailed evaluation for these different types of evidence can be found in *The Evidence for Quality* (Bogue and Saunders, 1992).

Let us close this discussion on evidence with another "governing ideal." To the importance of relating quality to mission, we add the importance of assembling multiple evidences on quality. The nature of both personal and institutional performance is too complex and diverse to be captured in a single data point. Consider the leadership and educational posture of the accounting department chair . . .

- who knows that her students have the highest pass rate on the CPA examination of any institution in the state.
- who has a trend line of high satisfaction from graduates over recent years.
- whose files are filled with a clear majority of complimentary letters from employers of her graduates.
- whose students regularly perform better on campus-wide assessments of communication and critical thinking skills.
- whose department was praised by a recent program review panel of accounting faculty from other institutions.

This chair has a cluster of evidence, of performance intelligence, useful in making both decisions and improvements. Just as physicians do not have a health meter in their offices, but assess our health by examining a cluster of medical evidence, so do we need a cluster of performance evidence to make quality judgments about our students, programs, and institutions.

3. What standard of performance will we accept? Identifying performance evidence raises the question of standards? Will we employ:

   - Criterion Standards — comparing performance to a predetermined criterion level?
   - Comparative Standards — judging performance against a "normed" population of students or programs?
   - Connoisseurship Standards — evaluating performance via the opinions and values of a panel of judges?

   As an evidence of collegiate quality, for example, accreditation and program reviews are built heavily on the connoisseurship standard, in which the evidence on quality is evaluated according to the knowledge, values, and experience of the visiting team. Whether a program or an institution gets a pass or fail, an excellent or unsatisfactory rating, depends on the judgment of the team. And this leads to our final question.

4. Who will make the judgments of quality? In the early years of the *U. S. News and World Report* reputational ranking studies, college presidents were asked to rank institutions. A decent argument could be made that the president of Vanguard University may know little about Coastal College, beyond his or her friendship with the president or limited anecdotal evidence. Of such

tangential knowledge can come reputational rankings circulated over the land. To the credit of *U.S. News and World Report*, later rankings revealed increased sophistication of criteria and judges. A single rater using a global criterion was replaced with multiple raters using multiple criteria. Both campus officers and board members need to know whether those making quality judgments of programs and services have sufficient knowledge and experience to warrant our confidence.

Let us close this exploration on the assessment of quality with a note on another "governing ideal." Quality assurance is a decision and discovery exercise. The principal reason for an aggressive quality assurance program on any campus should be to inform the decisions made about students, policies, and programs — the call of "first accountability." It is unfortunate that too many campuses still require assessment exercises having no decision utility or application whatsoever. We recall, for example, a two-year college and a university that had required their graduates to take a mandated test of general education, in this case the ACT COMP battery. Neither institution used the results for program or student performance decisions. It would not be a difficult task for a college leader to discover whether a campus was using quality information in its policy and program decisions.

Quality assurance is more than a decision venture. It is also a venture in discovery. The search for truth certainly involves the theoretical, but can involve elements of empiricism and accident as well. Does the spark of creativity favor those folks standing or sitting, or those in motion? Reflection and action are complements in the search for truth. Quality assurance ventures should be ventures in learning and discovery.

The Nurture of Quality

What questions can college leaders use to evaluate quality assurance policies and programs on the campus or campuses for which they are responsible? Here are themes and questions to help examine campus commitment to quality assurance, a summary look at the "governing ideals" we've been exploring.

Distinction in Mission. Does the campus have a distinctive mission statement? Questions of ends encourage questions of beginnings. Inquiries of performance will eventually lead to inquiries of purpose. The architecture of the campus mission furnishes an essential foundation for an effective quality assurance effort. Does the campus have a crisp statement of mission and values, a statement that clearly and forcefully reveals what the campus stands for? If the name of the campus were masked in the mission statement and the content so vague and indistinctive that it could describe a hundred other campuses, it might be argued that you have the origins of a quality problem.

Evidence of Improvement. Can the campus offer evidence of improvements that have been made to program and policy as a result of assessment and quality inquiries? The improvement question is one that should be posed and answered for every organized unit on campus. A campus or program unit that cannot offer a reasonably prompt and substantive answer to the question of "What did you do with what you found out?" deserves skepticism about the strength and substance of its quality assurance efforts.

Linkage to Teaching and Learning. How have quality inquiries been used to improve teaching and learning, to enhance student/faculty/staff growth and development? Are quality assurance and assessment activities "faculty friendly"? We will not have to search our memories very deeply to remember who the primary

architects of quality are. They are the faculty who elevated our vision, lifted us from the poverty of the commonplace, and pushed us to the far edge of our potential. Assessment and quality assurance exercises unconnected to teaching and learning improvement are empty exercises.

External Standards. In the early history of American higher education, one of the principal board member roles was to "examine" the proposed graduates. Thus, to the judgments and standards of the faculty was added the "external standard" of the board. The use of external standards continues to be found in externally referenced assessment exercises and the use of external teams in accreditation and program review. There is a philosophic tension inherent in this governing ideal. Some contemporary philosophies of quality, Total Quality Management, for example, justifiably insists that those responsible for the product are responsible for quality. Is it a misplacement of trust to insert a third party or external standard into the quality assurance process? I think not. An essential feature of the academy is testing ideas against the larger community of scholars. The results of our work must come into public forum at some time.

Multiple Evidence. An effective quality assurance program will involve the acquisition of multiple evidences on both student and program performance. Does the campus have a variety of quality evidence — conventional tests, program reviews, accreditation, licensure results, client satisfaction and follow-up, and perhaps more innovative intelligence that facilitates assessment? And has the institution examined the philosophic posture suggested by the cluster of measures or indicators identified?

That our measures and indicators are symbols of what we value, that our measures may both inform and

confine are ideas worth revisiting at this point. David Dill has furnished a thoughtful examination on the difference in the content and use of performance information systems between corporate and collegiate sectors (1992). As Dill points out, if we are interested in quality assurance for programs, we might resort to sampling of student performance at many different points in the educational process: application, admission, selected academic check points, graduation, beyond graduation. If, however, we want to engage another quality assurance question — whether every one of our graduates had acquired specified knowledge or skill — then sampling approaches will not suffice. The identification of strategy and the development of management philosophy leads to our next theme and guideline.

Strategic and Systemic Perspective. Does the campus have a strategic and unifying vision of quality? This vision will be built on the idea that there is no policy, no behavior, no practice that does not influence quality. Moreover there will be a coherent and logical system of interactions among the various institutional approaches to quality assurance. The philosophy and components of the quality assurance system will be characterized by awareness and allegiance — known and owned by faculty and staff.

A campus whose quality assurance efforts salute these "governing ideals" will have experienced the renewal power of these ideals. Such a campus will have rediscovered purpose and priority, promoted the development of its faculty and staff via continued learning, and strengthened community. There can be no quality in an educational enterprise without caring, and there can be no caring without community. With this note on community and quality in mind, let us examine a concept currently in management vogue, that of Total Quality Management (TQM), and ask what potential it offers for collegiate quality assurance.

Total Quality Management

The term "Total Quality Management" (TQM), also referred to as strategic quality management, has emerged from the work of writers that includes W. Edwards Deming, W. A. Shewart, Philip Crosby, Joseph Juran, Kaoru Ishikana, and David Garvin. An informing and integrating work, one offering a favorable treatment of TQM as applied to higher education, is Daniel Seymour's *On Q: Causing Quality in Higher Education* (1992). Seymour is "convinced that accrediting agencies, program reviews, standing committees, control-minded governing boards, and the occasional well-intentioned task force" will not be the instruments for causing quality in higher education (Seymour, 1992, p. X). He offers TQM as an answer to his question: "Is there a better way to manage higher education?"

Seymour's advocacy of TQM warrants thoughtful review. Seymour suggests that current and conventional quality instruments, such as program reviews and accreditation, make little significant contribution to college quality. He sees these instruments as occasional devices that convey the appearance of quality and that establish a "good enough" mindset. Those who have been on both the giving and receiving end of program reviews and accreditation reviews will know the liabilities of these and other "evidence" of quality previously cited in this chapter. Both these instruments are built, however, on the premise and promise of improvement, an idea central to TQM and one of the governing ideals of quality emphasized in this chapter.

Is it necessary to deprecate the contributions of quality assurance instruments already in place in order to appreciate what TQM has to offer? I think not. Space constraints do not permit scrutiny of all the principles cited for TQM. Having accented the principle of continuous improvement, we elect to examine two additional ideas from TQM. With respect to the driving

principle of TQM, the principle of client satisfaction, few would argue that we listen enough to our students and other clients. There are, however, critical differences between corporate and collegiate settings in the application of this principle. Any faculty member who has found his or her caring for students in tension with caring for standards knows the limitation of this quality test for colleges and universities. Students do indeed, as Seymour suggests, vote with their feet. It is sad when they occasionally vote for shoddy and shallow options; and when they do, the ideal of quality should not be exchanged for the notion of satisfaction.

A point in passing. Seymour offers a chapter in his book entitled "Choosing to be Distinctive." It is a clarion call that opens with this painful but accurate note: "The reason so few people have a clear understanding of their institution's vision is because there is really nothing in it worth remembering" (p. 62). As Seymour notes, the more "filler" and generalities one can find in a mission or vision statement, the less likely a campus can translate that vision into a quality reality. Linking quality to mission first involves a thoughtfully constructed mission statement, as we affirmed in an earlier "governing ideal."

Now a word on problem solving. Many campuses are trying TQM. While some faculty and administrative officers see TQM as appropriate for improvements in the admissions office, the business office, the facilities maintenance office, the campus security office, or other administrative settings, others note, as does Seymour, that these are not the only settings where "we degrade, we hassle, and we ignore" (p. 115). Will we be as quick to see opportunities for listening to our clients, for continuous improvement, for problem solving in the academic heart of colleges and universities — where students can be taken in harm's way by low and empty

expectations, by assessment exercises having little or no decision utility, by a vision of quality depending more on faculty publication counts than teaching and caring for our students? This is a question that collegiate leaders can legitimately explore.

Whether the initial euphoria and the subsequent quiet passage of some previously heralded management concepts will, in retrospect, also describe the fate of TQM in colleges and universities remains a test of time. An argument can be made that many of the philosophical principles cited for TQM have been at work in academia for some time. The quest for quality will always remain an unfinished journey, and there is no reason to neglect any conceptual tool that will aid us in that quest. As with any tool, the effectiveness of its application turns on the artistry of the user in ensuring that it fits the time, task, and place.

As an interesting aside, all is not consensus on the application of TQM in corporate sector organizations. In an article appearing in the January 1993 issue of *Management Review* entitled "Ten Reasons Why TQM Doesn't Work," Oren Harari comments that:

> TQM is only one of many possible means to obtain quality. In other words, quality is sacred; TQM is not. There's another difference: as we shall see, quality is about unbending focus, passion, iron discipline and a way of life for all hands. TQM is about statistics, jargon, committees and quality departments. (1993, p. 33)

This critique of TQM in the corporate sector strikes me as another instance where we are unhappily inclined to throw out the baby with the bath water. It does remind us, however, of an equally unfortunate tendency, prevalent in both the business and collegiate world: to seize the latest management fad and associated acronym as

the cure for all that ills. My previous comments suggest that there are useful lessons to be gleaned from TQM philosophy and others to be approached with a great deal of care.

One other postscript to Harari's notes I would offer. While the metaphor of corporate and collegiate leaders orchestrating organizational voices and serving as musical maestros has been faulted (see, for example, Mintzberg's 1973 *Harvard Business Review* article, "The Manager's Job: Folklore and Fact"), I'd like for the moment to retain the image, for I think it too contains some useful truth. Having been enough of a student on the French horn to manage a couple of seasons as assistant principal with the Memphis Symphony Orchestra and a couple of summer seasons with the Nashville Symphony many years ago, I am attracted to musical analogies.

It's possible for an individual musician or an ensemble of any size, including a full orchestra, to play correctly: that is, with zero defects — and as the statistical process control folks would say, "In control and capable." But this is not musical quality. In the orchestra hall, customers are patrons. And patrons know that correct music is not necessarily quality music. If the music lacks passion and fire, inventiveness and imagination, "correctness" will not transform a dull and uninspired performance into a quality performance. In the orchestra hall of the university will our students not also be able to discern when we are correct . . . and when we care! Now to my closing point.

Heart First: A Vision Of Quality

College leaders can ascertain whether campuses under their care can offer a range of evidence of collegiate quality, whether these campuses can demonstrate policy, program, and personnel improvements that have been made as a result of quality inquiry, and whether educational and management decisions are being informed

by quality information. These are conceptual or "head first" concerns, and they are among the most important "governing ideals" of quality cited in this chapter.

But the principal guarantor of quality is not "head first" but "heart first" actions of caring and daring:

> The promise of quality resides, then, in the plain of our passions. Do we care enough for truth, do we care enough for service, and do we care enough for human growth and dignity that our vision of quality permeates and penetrates the entire campus and touches the mind and heart of every person who serves there? Will that vision yield standards and encouragement that call our students and our colleagues from the poverty of the commonplace, that salute the promise of each one on the campus (whether student or staff), and that launch each person to the far reaches of his or her potential? Will that vision reveal a happy curiosity and active compassion? Will that vision marry a respect for diversity of mission and talent with a scorn for shoddy work, whether individual or institutional? And will that vision respond not just to the intellectual call to advance the truth but also the ethical call of justice, dignity, integrity, and nobility? The promise can only be realized in a community of caring, which ought to be an accurate descriptor of a quality college or university. (Bogue and Saunders, 1992, p. 280)

In Sand and Foam, Kahlil Gibran wrote: "Your heart and my mind will never agree until your mind ceases to live in numbers and my heart in the mist" (1973, p. 30). Not all that is real, not all that is meaningful, not all that is beautiful in colleges and universities, or any other learning organization, will yield to numbers. There are, however, "governing ideals" that encourage colleges and universities to engage performance questions more

effectively — questions as legitimate and essential to collegiate organizations as to others. No, more legitimate and essential! A mind and heart cheated of promise and potential — is this not a more painful mistake than a faulty computer or car?

In commending these "governing ideals" of quality to the attention of college leaders, I seek not so much consensus or closure as to promote curiosity about the nature and nurture of quality, to encourage a vision of collegiate quality assurance as a venture of both decision and discovery, and to stimulate an action agenda of caring and daring.

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Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Investment and Quality in Higher Education

Sven Groennings

We are between a rock and a hard place. The rock is investment, the hard place is quality. The tension screams out for new lenses to view the problem, new solutions based on broad reassessment, provocative discussion, and perhaps even a new "social contract" between education at all levels on the one side and government and community on the other. Strategic vision and leadership must effectively integrate the two.

If we stay our present course, we face two enormous adaptations which are likely to be incompatible. The first is to our global knowledge economy, in which our productivity and standard of living depend upon the competitive quality of our educational performance. We face higher expectations regarding the quality of the knowledge we produce. This is a challenge to content, pedagogy, standards and assessment, productivity and accountability.

The second adaptation is to a deteriorating financial situation. For the first time, we have had declining support for higher education two years in a row. In some states, the reductions in college and university budgets were deeper than other cuts. Competition for funding against other human services, elementary and secondary education, and needed infrastructure grows sharper. Yet costs have been rising, tuitions are escalating, while Pell grants are frozen. Meanwhile, capital renewal and

replacement needs of $60 billion equal nearly half the operating costs of all this country's colleges and universities. Moreover, enrollments continue to grow and a major increase in those of conventional college age is on the horizon.

I contend that the connecting element in a new social contract is reform, which is needed for quality and provides a case for investment. To make this case for a new contract, however, we need to become clear about both the case for investment *and* the reform goals and processes we associate with quality.

The Importance of Investment in our Global Knowledge Economy

It is most important that this country understand the basic case for investment, especially the economic returns stemming from investment in education compared to other investment. We need to make the case that our prosperity depends upon our investment in education. No rich nation is ignorant; no well educated nation is in poverty. Prosperity increases with the quality of educational achievement. Historical projection suggests that our colleges and universities will be increasingly important for this country's productivity and prosperity. In 1890, only one percent of Americans went to college. Within five years, 20 percent of all new jobs will require four years of college. Higher education is essential, yet human capital has not been given priority in public investment.

One of our problems is that Federal policy has favored investment in physical capital over human capital. The Economic Recovery and Tax Act, which supply-siders inspired and which took effect in 1982, lowered corporate and individual income tax rates for the immediate purpose of increasing private investment in physical capital. The results, however, did not include

large increases in job-creating investment, economic growth or family income. Instead we got an enormous deficit which fed on itself, fueled by increased defense spending. Thus the policies implemented to stimulate investment in physical capital sharply constrained our funding of human capital investment, which is largely in the public sector. As economist Carol Frances points out, "No supply-sider asked what is the proper balance in the nation between investment in physical capital and investment in human capital to increase productivity and stimulate economic growth." By its failed tax policies, the Federal government has compounded the problem of investing adequately in our people. We now spend one-third more to service the Federal debt than we spend on all of America's public schools.

Government has not properly linked educational and economic competitiveness in our global economy. Yet the case for educational investment has become compelling, given reform. Our economy has entered a third era. The first was that of the local agricultural economy, the second the national industrial economy. We are now in a global knowledge economy. Eighty percent of all American goods and services compete with those of other countries, either at home or abroad, and increasingly the competition is in high technology and sophisticated services. And now, eighty percent of the value of our goods and services is attributable to the input of human capital, often working with physical capital. This is to say that eighty percent of productive value depends upon the immediate input and competitive knowledge of our workforce. Knowledge is the key to increasing our competitiveness and standard of living. The implications of this fundamental change to a global knowledge economy are of the magnitude associated with the Reformation, the Renaissance and the Industrial Revolution. The economic center of the Knowledge Revolution

is education. Knowledge capital is our most important investment. What counts today is the educational wealth of nations. We need to manage our knowledge assets with the care we devote to our financial assets. The nation needs a quality portfolio if we are to prosper.

We invested heavily in education after World War II, and studies show that education made a very large contribution to the economy's excellent growth from 1948 to 1973. Subsequently, growth in the nation's standard of living has slowed while the quality of the nation's education and training has received critical scrutiny. Since 1973, growth in per capita income has averaged less than half that of the preceding 25 years, resulting in a cumulative average earnings loss of $28,000 for each American — that is for each person in this room! Other countries meanwhile have achieved productivity growth rates comparable to those the United States enjoyed earlier.

To at least match our competitors, we must improve growth in our GDP by one percentage point, from the recent 2.25 percent to 3.25 percent, about the rate we enjoyed from 1948 to 1973. The challenge is to achieve this change in an economy in which 80 percent of the value of our goods and services depends on the competencies of our people. It cannot be done without investing in education and training. The issues are: how much will be required, where, under what conditions, and who is to invest.

Investment Principles

From an investment perspective, there are two strategies. The first is to raise educational quality with our current investment. The second, based on improved outcomes, is to invest more dollars in education. To a considerable extent, given costs including technology and faculty renewal, new investments will be needed to

improve our use of current spending. However, citizens, taxpayers, parents, students, legislators and business leaders are not likely to invest new money in education unless educators first agree to commit themselves to wiser use of funds now available.

While it is vitally important to invest in education, there is not likely to be much investment unless five principles are widely accepted:

1. Educational competitiveness is basic to economic competitiveness, fundamentally important to our economy, its productivity growth, and our standard of living as well as to a healthy civic culture and human fulfillment.
2. Education should achieve the same rate of productivity growth as is needed for the economy as a whole. Indeed, if it does not, the economy will suffer. Productivity growth may be defined as improved qualitative return for investment made.
3. Achieving this productivity growth through improved education requires investment and reform.
4. Reform to improve outcomes is a reasonable condition of new investment, and
5. Accountability for performance, which is demand-driven by tax-payers and policy-makers, is expected.

These understandings might underlie an implicit "educational competitiveness contract" between educators responsible for reform and those who authorize new expenditures.

On the Nature of Reform and the Quality of Our Vision

Politicians tend to like the concept of reform, assuming it means that the system will get more from the investment made. Yet we academics must give reform a very careful operational definition. Politicians are

interested in two very different kinds of reform. One is to improve learning outcomes, the other is to increase relevance to economy and community. One may reform either by changing priorities and directions to meet new circumstances or by becoming more effective along the existing path. Politicians now appreciate the importance of TQM to American as well as Japanese management, but the Q in TQM tends to focus on improvement processes in management more than processes to enhance learning outcomes. Investors will expect our team members to play their game better, just as other professionals must meet rising performance standards. Legislators don't have a great track record for funding the improvement of faculty pedagogy and assessment of student learning. We will be expected to improve procedurally, and probably will not win new investment by emphasizing methods. The broader issue is whether we are doing the right "big things," not whether we are doing existing "things" in the right way. Investment in reform is likely to require being inventive about those new purposes and emphases that will increase value and desired outcomes. What will really count is the quality of our vision.

The Principles of Investment Applied to Elementary and Secondary Education

I do want to make the point that reform to improve learning outcomes has an enormous payoff. Before turning to higher education, I would like to illustrate this point by applying the previously mentioned investment principles to elementary and secondary schools. Their quality is fundamental to our nation's competitiveness — especially our public schools, since 90 percent of our people attend them. That is why we have no choice but to empower our public schools. Our current spending does not match that of competing countries. We not

only spend proportionately less, but gain less student performance for our money. Moreover, the United States will need to spend proportionately more than other countries because of the more heterogeneous nature of our people.

Suppose we achieve the same rate of productivity growth in precollegiate education as we need to achieve in the economy as a whole: round it downward to 3 percent, as measured by assessments of learning outcomes. That rate of improvement seems feasible. In a decade, the profound and presumably world-class competitive outcome would be a one-third gain in learning.

We spend $250 billion each year on public and private schooling. A 3 percent greater return each year would be the equivalent of $8 billion a year or $80 billion in a decade. Furthermore, it suggests that after a few years we can even achieve reform dividends sufficient to reduce incremental spending, maybe even eventually reduce spending while retaining a higher level of educational quality and productivity. The illustration makes concrete and vivid why it is worthwhile to develop a reform strategy based on increasing productivity.

Higher Education: Investment in Reform

The higher education and public school reform movements are parallel in their concern about content, teaching and student achievement. However, the strategic situations of different levels of education are not parallel. Whereas precollegiate education is an American competitive weakness, higher education — whatever its problems — is the envy of the world. Its aggregate budget exceeds $150 billion. Legislators will direct resources toward the greater problem.

In Virginia last Fall, the State Council on Higher Education, facing greatly increased enrollments in the years ahead, voted to tighten admissions standards, move

all remedial education to community colleges, and encourage actions to enable students to graduate in three years. The Council also began considering proposals to require professors to spend more time teaching and to eliminate up to thirty percent of the courses now offered on state college campuses. While the Council had to back off, the message was symptomatic.

Across the country, higher education will be forced to reform and to increase productivity. Only exceptionally will investment be for expansion. But there is a case to be made for investment in reform, which requires fresh strategic vision and vitality. The increasing salience of a competitive global knowledge economy suggests seven very broad challenges.

(1) Articulate a public philosophy reflecting change. As knowledge becomes more powerfully important in our economy and thus in the prosperity of our communities, higher education as the principal creator and disseminator of knowledge will be more central to our economic future and will face broadened role expectations. We abandoned the last century's elitist public philosophies as institutions expanded clienteles and increased research and academic specialization to meet needs of the industrial economy. A new public philosophy must link the centrality of higher education to community, state, and economic role in global context.

(2) Initiate and push innovation. Relevance expectations may lead to renewing core curricula, using integrative approaches, and linking curriculum content to workplace and community through experiential learning. Certainly increasing relevance means increasing international content for all students, as every field and more careers — from business to engineering to journalism — require international knowledge. Is there yet a campus that offers a course on the global economy as it touches upon all our lives? Achieving change may require taking new interest in the agendas of the national

academic disciplines, which are the gatekeepers of curricular change. Productivity expectations surely will require better assessment of learning outcomes. Productivity expectations may lead also to questions about effective organization, as happened at the turn of the century with the coming of the research universities.

(3) Prioritize teacher education. Higher education builds on the base provided by elementary and secondary schools, yet schools of education have been peripheral to the liveliest interests of universities while legislators who see higher education making little fresh contribution to the improvement of our troubled public schools are cutting higher education budgets. No doubt universities will make their greatest contribution by reforming higher education, but it is politically as well as substantively important to be directly influential in public school reform now. Surely it will be politically smart to advance teacher education outcomes by way of commitment, upgraded budgets and admissions standards, and graduates' mastery of content, pedagogy, SCANS competencies and assessment.

(4) Define your foreign policies and make sure the larger community appreciates your distinctive international expertise and utility in our global economy. The economic consequences of our college and university foreign policies now exceed $7 billion, $4 billion of it in foreign student revenue. Involvements are increasing rapidly and represent vulnerabilities as well as assets. Aspects include portfolio investment, technology transfer, procurement, governance, research and cooperative arrangements with foreign institutions. Foreign policies have consequences for other policies affecting campuses. For example, when Minnesota State University established its Akita campus in Japan, it faced the financial implications of equal opportunity for Minnesotans to participate. On direct investment, foreign companies tend to locate near our universities, because they provide

graduates, partnerships, services and ambience they want. Universities should be valued partners in attracting internationally based capital and employment to American communities.

(5) Define academic productivity and the terms of accountability. The great danger is that if we fail to address these subjects and to negotiate understandings about them, they will be defined and imposed too narrowly by others. It will be difficult to dodge the productivity and accountability issues. Costs have been rising because of inflation, technology acquisition, increasingly sophisticated research equipment and environmental controls, higher construction costs, access for the disabled, and having an aging faculty at the upper end of the pay scale. Costs have risen unevenly, increasing rapidly in research while costs per student have lagged in schools of education, the humanities and the social sciences.

Productivity gains, which have both qualitative and quantitative dimensions for our global knowledge society, might be reflected in improved learning outcomes, higher rates of retention and degree completion, more relevant and greater output, superior public service and impact upon economic growth.

Accountability must be multi-dimensional and, for political as well as self-serving reasons, must include contribution to improvement of our public schools, where higher educators are major stakeholders.

(6) Examine and push methods of improving productivity. The list of potential methods can be long and even include painful entries: curricular change, programmatic restructuring, instructional improvement including better use of learning technologies, staff development programs, and changes in tenure policy. TQM might be introduced as a management tool. We should explore whether it might be adapted to improve learning outcomes.

(7) Build an economic case for investment. To advance productivity growth, more should be invested to develop human resources at all levels. Higher education is most responsible for providing the higher skills needed for higher incomes. Most graduates move directly into productive employment. The higher the education, the greater is the return on investment, and — the economic case most requiring our focus — higher education will demonstrate high relevance and high productivity. It is relevant competitively that the European Community is investing in higher education to increase social mobility, innovate programmatically, broaden the management of economies of scale and increase productivity and competitiveness. What counts is competitive quality based on education.

The Investment Needed

The United States now faces a crucial need to rebalance its national investment priorities by putting more stock in education and training. Doing so involves all levels of education and all levels of government. We must begin with the understanding that wise investment in human capital is fundamental to productivity growth. We have known that this is so at least since Adam Smith wrote in *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) that "The skill, dexterity and knowledge of a nation's people is the most powerful engine of its economic growth."

The first issue is: how much more human capital investment is needed? The answer is: the amount required to restore a competitive rate of economic growth.

The second issue is: under what conditions should we invest, and how will we know we are investing well? The answer is: we will keep our end of the new social contract by reforming education *and* increasing educational productivity growth.

The third issue is: where should the money be invested? The answer is: at all levels, with proportionately more to elementary and secondary education in the years immediately ahead and a concentration at all levels on investing in reform and greater productivity.

The fourth issue is: what should be the source of investment? The answer is: all levels of government, with a steady increase in the share of the Federal Government to compensate for deficiencies and distortions in tax policies elsewhere and to meet the national interest in competitiveness.

The Higher Education Act should facilitate the adaptation of American higher education to our global knowledge economy. It is of course fundamentally important to help educate people by providing adequate student financial assistance. But three other objectives are now of very major importance also: support for innovation, internationalization and teacher education.

In conclusion, our "big picture" priorities should be two: to link human capital investment to competitive economic productivity growth, and at all levels to link educational investment to educational reform *and* educational quality. Those, I believe, have become the strategic keys to new investment in higher education.

Barriers to Quality

Manning M. Pattillo, Jr.

As a graduate student in higher education at the University of Chicago after World War II, I had the privilege of studying under some of the pioneers in educational evaluation: Ralph Tyler, Benjamin Bloom, John Dale Russell, and Norman Burns.

At the University of Chicago in those days all degrees were awarded on the basis of the passage of examinations. No one could earn a degree by completing courses and accumulating credits. Tyler and Bloom directed the Board of Examinations, and at the undergraduate level the objectives of liberal education were carefully worked out in cooperation with the faculty. The objectives were defined in behavioral terms, and the examinations then tested for the desired behaviors.

I was greatly impressed with this approach and thought that a panacea had been discovered for greatly increasing the effectiveness of education. And it must be said that the academic results achieved at Chicago in those days were often remarkable. This method of defining what was to be learned and assessing the outcomes seemed so much better than the haphazard way in which most colleges and universities were and are conducted.

Meanwhile, John Dale Russell, Norman Burns, and others were developing better ways of evaluating institutions. They were pioneers in the surveying of colleges and universities in church and state systems of higher education and later for the purposes of accreditation. They brought to these tasks a new rigor and sophistication that

had been lacking in the older methods of appraising institutions. Through their efforts the North Central Association became the leading accrediting agency, and the principle of evaluating institutions in terms of their purposes, rather than by the application of standards, became well established.

I worked in the accrediting program of the North Central Association for seven years and was thoroughly schooled in this kind of evaluation. But the emphasis was on institutional resources, processes, and organization, not the results achieved. As a young scholar dedicated to the proposition that education, properly conducted, could solve most of the problems of society, I yearned for something better than the methods of evaluation employed by accrediting agencies at that time.

I then went on to two foundations where I continued to reflect on institutional evaluation for the purposes of philanthropy. Our aim was to improve the quality of education, and we worked hard to document the changes resulting from our grants.

Many years later, in the early 1980s, when I was serving on the Steering Committee for the Revision of the Accrediting Procedure in the Southern Association, I pushed hard for the incorporation of outcomes assessment as an important part of the evaluation of institutions for accreditation. Another member of the committee shared my conviction that institutions should be judged by their educational results, and we were able to get this adopted in the new procedure. It became a distinctive feature of the Southern Association and has now been emulated in other sections of the country and by other accrediting agencies.

This was a great step forward in the theory of accrediting. However, in actual practice it has not brought the improvement in the quality of higher education from which many of us had hoped. Clearer definition of purposes and more systematic assembly of evidence on the achievement

of educational purposes are not sufficient to insure rapid improvement in the quality of education.

Why not? What has undermined this noble effort? What has prevented a good idea from working? What are the barriers to quality? These are questions that must be addressed if American colleges and universities are to achieve a higher level of quality.

I would like to discuss briefly five problems in many colleges and universities today that are inhibiting quality, that are preventing institutions from accomplishing the educational results that we have a right to expect. These could be called barriers to quality.

Low Admission Standards

A substantial fraction of the approximately 13 million students in American higher education are ill-prepared for college work and are not really serious about getting an education. They do not have a good reason for being in college. Administrators defend the admission of these students on the grounds of democracy, but we know that the real motivation for low admission standards is often money. Most institutions, both public and private, are enrollment driven. The more students they admit, the more money they have.

State appropriations are often based on enrollment, and this tends to lower admission standards in many public colleges and universities. Private institutions that are heavily dependent on tuition income are often similarly motivated. It may well be that 50 percent of college students would not have been admitted if educational considerations had been paramount. Their presence discourages conscientious faculty members, wastes money, dilutes the intellectual atmosphere of higher education, and leads to mediocre results.

This brings us to a central point in institutional evaluation. I would assert that *the* most important, most pervasive

single ingredient determining the quality of a college or university is the quality of its students. Bright, well-prepared, and especially *serious* students contribute more to the accomplishment of the purposes of an institution than any other factor. The only exception I can think of would be a college or university that announced as its primary purpose the education of *unpromising* students. I am not aware of any college that operates on that principle, though the community college, by virtue of its history and role in postsecondary education, is certainly dedicated to the education of a broad range of students. And some of the historically black colleges, in actual practice, exist to serve students ill-prepared for higher education. But almost all institutions acknowledge that the selection of students on some academic basis is essential to the achievement of their missions.

The more rigorous colleges of arts and sciences and research universities, in particular, recognize that the abler their students, the better they can accomplish their purposes. Attracting promising students is a high priority for them. Yet many institutional evaluators, including some accrediting agencies, are unwilling to acknowledge this reality. They operate on that unstated and unexamined assumption that the quality of an institution's students can be ignored in assessing the quality of the institution. I have read dozens of reports of accrediting committees in which the important subject of admissions is dismissed with a sentence or two to the effect that the admissions procedures of an institution are appropriate to its purposes.

Faculties, graduate and professional schools, and employers know better, and administrators who are serious about academic quality will do their utmost to develop student bodies that are well prepared to take advantage of the opportunities offered in higher education. If colleges will insist that applicants for admission present evidence of competence, that will not only improve collegiate education but also encourage reform in the high schools.

Higher Education as a Part-Time Enterprise

Most college students today who are listed as full-time students in the Registrar's Office are in fact part-time students. They are employed for 20 to 40 hours a week in non-academic jobs, even though they carry a full load. This is a part of student culture, regardless of financial need. Colleges and universities have been quite content to adjust their expectations accordingly.

Everyone admires the student of limited means who must work if he is to remain in college. However, many students work in order to afford luxuries or to be independent of their parents.

The prevalence of outside employment has, to a greater extent than most of us realize, made higher education a part-time activity for most students. In interviewing students at many different colleges, I have found that one hour of preparation for an hour in class is fairly typical for undergraduate students today. There are, of course, notable exceptions, especially in the physical and biological sciences, and students in graduate and professional schools usually invest much more time in their studies.

Likewise, some faculty members have learned how to reduce the time they devote to their professional responsibilities to the bare minimum. There are, to be sure, many faculty members who devote 50 or 60 hours a week to teaching, research, student advising, and committee work, but others who have lost their zest for scholarly work may get by on 18 to 20 hours a week. Most of us can cite colleagues who fit that description. Any alert department head or dean can provide examples.

Twenty years ago the national press reported the scandal of a college teacher who held full-time appointments at three institutions in Pennsylvania and New York without his employers knowing it, until he was in an airplane accident and the facts came out. This, I hope was a uniquely bad case, but the fact remains that for many faculty members academic work is a part-time profession.

"Watered-Down" Curricula

In the name of meeting student needs and providing preparation for a wide variety of occupations, colleges and universities today offer hundreds of curricula that have precious little substance. One of my idiosyncratic pastimes for many years has been the reading of college catalogues; I find them more exciting than detective stories or TV movies! As jaded as I am about postsecondary education, I am still shocked by the "thinness" of many programs leading to associate and bachelor's degrees. The catalogue reader cannot help wondering what a departmental faculty can find to fill up two years or four years of courses in some of the curricula that are offered. And the situation is even worse in many non-degree programs of continuing education.

Several years ago I visited a well-known college and noticed that the school of continuing education offered evening courses in astrology. I asked the assistant dean whether the college considered astrology a hobby or a field of knowledge. She responded in all seriousness that the faculty treated astrology as a field of knowledge. Many other less spectacular illustrations of dubious substance could be cited.

"Big-Time" Athletics

As Bartlett Giamatti, then President of Yale and later Commissioner of baseball, remarked several years ago, intercollegiate athletics is the "most corrupt" area of American higher education. That is not quite accurate, because the colleges and universities in the elite Division III of the National Collegiate Athletic Association follow a strictly amateur code which comes close to the ideal. What Giamatti was referring to was "big-time" athletics — that portion of the entertainment industry associated with universities, in which hirelings employ highly paid coaches to perform in huge stadiums and coliseums before tens of thousands of

paying spectators. This enterprise is destructive of both the moral fabric and the educational quality of higher education. He spoke at a time when several prominent universities were being penalized for cheating scandals. And he was, of course, absolutely right.

The consequences of "big-time" sports are indeed a barrier to educational quality. Standards of admission and retention often have to be stretched to accommodate athletes. In some institutions the usual procedures for admission are by-passed completely. Remedial courses must be provided, and athletes are steered into easy courses. Often football and basketball players are isolated from bonafide students in housing and dining. Large amounts of financial aid must be diverted to attract athletes, regardless of their academic promise. Sometimes professors are cajoled into giving passing grades for unsatisfactory performance, and records in registrar's offices are tampered with to maintain the eligibility of star players. Perhaps more serious than any of these specific abuses is the distortion in values that occurs when games that should be wholesome extracurricular activities are organized into multi-million dollar enterprises that overshadow the legitimate functions of a university. Big-time athletics, as conducted today, misrepresent on a massive scale the basic values of higher education.

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools is planning to give greater attention to intercollegiate athletics in the process of accreditation. If this effort is successful, it will help to remove an ugly blemish from higher education. The North Central Association tried unsuccessfully to reform athletics in its region in the 1950s; let us hope that the climate for reform is better in the 1990s.

Erosion of Academic Freedom

Each period of history has its own threats to academic freedom. In earlier centuries it was often religious authorities

who challenged freedom of thought and teaching in colleges and universities. Early in the 20th century aca-demic freedom was sometimes threatened by rich donors, who demanded that radical professors be dismissed. In the 1950s the fear of communism gave rise to legislative investigations in California, Illinois, and elsewhere that had to be opposed by the defenders of freedom.

In the last decade we have seen the emergence of what the *New York Times* has called "the hegemony of political correctness." Powerful forces for racial equality, the rights of women, and protection against harassment have led to well-intentioned but harmful limitations on freedom in colleges and universities. Efforts to curb offensive behavior have often resulted in campus codes, usually promulgated by student affairs administrators, that have diminished academic freedom. In two notable cases — the University of Michigan and the University of Wisconsin — such codes have been struck down by the courts. In two acrimonious controversies — at Duke University and the University of Texas — faculties have risen up to oppose limitations on their freedom.

A closely related problem is the so-called "politicization" of higher education. Schools of thought have developed in fields as diverse as English literature, sociology, law, African-American studies, and business administration that are highly ideological and politically oriented. Recent controversies at Stanford, City College of New York, Georgia State, Harvard, Emory, Georgetown, Berkeley, and Chapel Hill have brought to public attention the kind of ideological struggles that are going on across the country. Many faculty members and administrators are fearful that objective and impartial scholarship is being sacrificed to ideological feuding. There are frequent accusations that students and junior faculty members are being forced to conform to party lines.

The traditional defender of academic freedom — the American Association of University Professors — seems not to be effective in dealing with current threats, and the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Association of Scholars have stepped forward to lead the fight for academic freedom in the 1990s.

For the purposes of our discussion, the point to be made is that any erosion of academic freedom is also a barrier to educational quality. Freedom is the greatest prerequisite for excellence in teaching and research.

Here, then, are five defects in American higher education that tend to destroy quality. To repeat, they are low admission standards that bring to our campuses too many young people who are not prepared to take advantage of the opportunities offered; the dilution of student and faculty performance because of outside employment or interests, making higher education a part-time activity; "watering down" of curricula by the offering of programs and courses that lack substance and rigor; the anti-educational impact of "big-time" athletics in many institutions; and, finally, the erosion of academic freedom in new and subtle ways.

Until we can overcome these barriers to quality, much of higher education will remain shoddy and mediocre.

Assessing Quality in Academic Programs

Libby V. Morris

The decade of the 1980s was an intense period of scrutiny of higher education. National reports focused on what was being learned and taught, how it was being learned and taught, and for what purpose or to what end the education was directed. At each level of the inquiry — content, method, and purpose — questions of quality were raised.

This paper will address the issue of "defining" quality in higher education. It is my contention that while the assessment movement has been successful in focusing attention on "measuring" quality in higher education, it has diverted our attention from the more fundamental question of "defining" quality in its broadest sense. First, I will briefly summarize the criticisms leveled against higher education and the quality of our product, (i.e., students during the last decade). Then, I will review some issues of quality within the context of professional education; and finally, like all good reports, I will advance some recommendations to improve quality without any appropriations to accompany them.

Quality and Community

The discussions of what constitutes quality in education and how we implement quality are not new to this decade or, in fact, even to this century. In 1828, President Day and Professor Kingsley produced the now famous Yale Report of 1828 which sought to answer the question of

what constitutes an educated person and "a superior education," and they proceeded to define and defend the curriculum which produced that person (Levine, 1978, p. 544). In Frederick Rudolph's words, Day's view was a "plea for quality" in higher education (Rudolph, 1977, p. 71). In 1945, the Harvard Committee on the Objectives of General Education in a Free Society addressed the issue of a curriculum that would serve the "good of society" and then proceeded to outline the course and method of study to ensure this end (Rudolph, 1977). In the last decade, a dozen or more reports summarized weaknesses and inferior outcomes in contemporary baccalaureate education (i.e., Bennett, 1984; National Institute of Education [NIE], 1984; Association of American Colleges, [AAC], 1985; National Commission on Excellence in Education [NCEE], 1983; Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching [CFAT], 1977).

The barrage of reports from the 1980s which critiqued higher education took aim specifically at undergraduate education and the deficiencies in quality across the curriculum. The five most commonly cited criticisms as summarized by Kimball (1988) are as follows:

1. Language study deserves a great deal more attention because present college graduates cannot read, write, or speak effectively.

This criticism is so common that we have become desensitized to its full meaning. The reports did not say that our graduates cannot speak, write or read; it said they cannot do so effectively. In other words, meaning and understanding preclude their participation in these activities on any but the most superficial level. This criticism is an indictment of the highest order. Most of human interaction is built upon communication whether it is written or read, spoken or heard. We must ask, "Are we graduating scores of students who can only 'call' words, circle the correct

answer, copy from books to create a paper, and speak in technical terms which do not communicate across groups?"

Democratic society rests upon our ability to communicate one with another, both within cultures and across cultures. The ability to speak across cultures is related to understanding the "supradialect" which holds access to the key concepts, events, words, and phrases from which the functional polity emerged and continues to evolve. To recognize the "supradialectical norm" is not to deny a multi-dialectical society, nor is it an attempt to replace the "language of one's intimacy" (Ferguson, 1968).

In mathematical terms, the supradialect is the set and the personal and professional dialects are the subsets. The subsets may be totally contained, partially overlapping, and in certain cases without any common members. Communication does not exist across unrelated sets. Knowledge begins as overlap occurs, and understanding develops as the members in common begin to outnumber the members that are unique. In education, we should attempt to enlarge the subsets and expand the set. When the boundaries expand, learning has occurred.

Our students are disadvantaged when they can speak only the language of their intimacy or birthright and the specialized languages of their professions, with minimal overlap with the larger language of the society, its institutions, its functions, and, dare I say, its heritage (Adelman, 1992). One of the driving forces of life is the desire to speak and be understood — to hear and understand and to create bridges across cultures with words and symbols. We are deficient when we can trade in stocks and bonds, conduct spectrum analysis across hundreds of elements and compounds, and design cloverleaf junctions, but we do not understand nor value communication in a democracy, in a company, in a family.

Ernest Boyer (1987) emphasizes the importance of communication in *College: The Undergraduate Experience in America.* He devotes a full chapter to "Language: The First

Requirement." In the final page of that chapter he moves beyond the simplistic understanding of language as reading and writing to the statement "Language study means much more than the mastery of technical procedures. Words are not merely formal tools; they represent the shared knowledge of a culture without which the potential for social cohesion is diminished" (Boyer, 1987, p. 81). I would advance that communication is the bedrock of all we do in education and in a democracy; yet, we are criticized for the poor quality our graduates exhibit in this important competency. We should define communication, assess it, improve it, and enjoy the results.

2. A second criticism of our colleges, which translates to programs because students overwhelmingly graduate from departmental or professional programs, states that colleges "do not and should inculcate a sense of 'values' in their graduates."

Insider trading, housing refinancing scandals, nationwide telephone scams, and other recent incidents of white collar crime suggest a disturbing failure on the part of our colleges. They have advanced technical competence by increasing professional expertise, but they have overlooked community competence by failing to foster those understandings or values necessary to live in community.

As educators and adults, we know from experience that values permeate every interaction, personal and professional. The reports and news stories call us to task for not developing the personal or ethical dimension of our students. Yet, to do so will require creativity and inducement of students. A recent survey of undergraduates found that three-quarters view career preparation as the top or one of the top two primary goals of college (Kimball, 1988). In a similar vein, the Cooperative Institutional Research Program's annual survey of 1992 college freshmen found student commitment to "being very well off financially" at 73 percent and the commitment to "develop a meaningful

philosophy of life" at 45 percent. In 1968, these freshman life goals were reversed in importance (Higher Education Research Institute, 1992).

Students in the 1990s tend to view technical skills in the major as preeminent and value development as peripheral and unnecessary. The logic is easy to see: the generalist or liberal arts major has no occupational referent in the workplace. In a competitive environment, technical skills and professional expertise in well-defined areas ascend in importance. In multiple fields — law, accounting, pharmacy, computing, nursing, engineering, and now even for nursing aides — legislation, accreditation, and a prescribed and narrowly focused curriculum defines entry into the workplace. To sell students on a broad base, when the workplace calls for specialization is to deny the reality of life in America in the fast approaching 21st century. We perhaps need to move beyond discussions of the integrated core to discussions of what I will call the "connected major."

In a recent survey, more than 80 percent of employers believed that the skills shortage was not in occupational skills but in work ethic skills. Although the point is debatable, the message is clear; values are at play in the workplace. We need to define values development as integral to a quality education. Those who have tread the path before must show the interrelatedness of believing, knowing, and doing.

3. Third, the reports affirm that college graduates should be good citizens.

The Education Commission of the States [ECS] in its 1986 report stressed the importance of elevating individual commitment and service to the society and the body politic (ECS, 1986). "The emphasis on citizenship refers not only to the nation but to all communities to which students belong. Indeed, 'community' may be the most often-used word in these reports" (Kimball, 1988). Alexander Astin, in the 1991 Louise McBee lecture, stated that "what

is especially remarkable about our neglect of the citizenship issue in the curriculum is that many of our college catalogues and mission statements include an explicit institutional commitment to developing citizenship . . . [and] that the concept of citizenship goes far beyond participation in the electoral process . . . [to] . . . how each of us relates to our families, our churches, our jobs, and our communities."

The lack of citizen involvement in governmental planning and the associated hysterical dialogue in response to perceived crises demonstrate the need to assist students in taking both their professional roles and avocational interests into community involvement. The phrase "of the people" has become synonymous with "voting;" "for the people" has become synonymous with "entitlements" and "special interests"; it is "by the people" that is suffering from neglect. Non-profit boards go unfilled because positions are unpaid or too high in liability, while high posts in government are dominated by the legal profession. Surely knowledge, skills, and ability in other professions would translate well into community and governmental involvement. A quality education will assist students in understanding individual responsibility and community need.

4. The fourth major point from the reports was a renewed call for general education — that is a "coherent and unifying purpose and structure for a curriculum that will serve all students throughout their lives" (Kimball, 1988).

Jerry Gaff, following his 1983 comprehensive study of the membership of the Association of American Colleges, concluded, "I am convinced that the problem with general education is basically a problem with the faculty." The great barrier to curricular coherence was attributed to the lack of faculty cohesiveness, to specialization, and to departmentalization. None of the reports has anything positive to say about these structural arrangements. Rather,

they cite the problematic developments of "overspecialization, hyperspecialization and self-isolating vocabularies."

5. The fifth and final point made in numerous reports is that teaching deserves greater emphasis.

It is ironic that in education we would have to say that our original and most fundamental mission needs more attention. Our students will not grow in the dimensions of language, ethics, and citizenship from teaching conceived as lecture, and assessment equated with grading. I will not elaborate on this point other than to say that I believe that most faculty would like to be good teachers; however, it is not news that the reward structure at universities and increasingly at colleges is based upon research and publication, and teaching is relatively unrewarded. The damage to the undergraduate curricula due to inattention is unavoidable.

In summary, the first three criticisms — the deficiencies in language, values and citizenship — describe a failure in goals. The last two criticisms describe a more general failure in content and process (i.e., the lack of coherence and unity in general education and the weakness in instruction).

Concern for Assessment

In response to the barrage of reports of the 1980s and other, sometimes legislative, calls for improvement in undergraduate curricula and student performance, measurement and assessment have swept across the landscape of higher education. What is new in higher education is not the aim toward quality in purpose, or the aim toward quality in content and methods; rather, what is new is the growing efforts to improve or demonstrate by assessment and measurement the presence of quality in *whatever* we intend to do. The "new kid on the block" is the assessor.

The assessment movement proceeds under various names — some new, some old — such as accreditation, licensure, student outcomes, program reviews, and follow-up studies (Bogue & Saunders, 1992). The assessment movement for both accountability and program improvement has introduced new terminology, methods, designs, and models to a broad-based constituency and may move us closer to a re-examination of what we do and how well we do it.

Assessment has the potential to re-open the debate on purpose in higher education; however, a review of the literature will show that in some cases the means are about to overtake the ends, and assessment has some potential to become the end in itself. The literature is replete with rationales for assessment, case stories, guides, tools for measurement, the how, the why, the pitfalls (Terenzini, 1989).

I would propose that the major reports of the 1980s do not criticize us for failure to do well the things we set out to do; but instead the criticisms focus upon our overall failure to do the things that matter most. It is not a question of inferior quality in the goal reached, but an inappropriateness in pursing a single goal, (i.e., professional preparation pursued narrowly). It is this singularity of focus as opposed to plurality of goals in our programs that generates this dilemma. Assessment must not merely answer the question, "Did we accomplish the thing we set out to do?" but also, "Did we do the 'right' things?" Assessment must help us to define quality, as well as measure current activities for quality assurance.

The question that is perennial in education is "education to what end," for what purpose? The argument here is not for a singular superior goal that is common to all programs and all persons for all times, but a re-examination of the goals that are important for each program, for those students, and in this time; goals that reflect professional

knowledge, personal competencies; and community responsiveness, (i.e., goals that recognize that life and work take place in a political, social, and cultural context.

When program goals and objectives are clearly in mind, content and method will more closely follow, and assessment will proceed with questions involving both measurement and judgement. To examine program quality we should ask, "Are the goals clear, consensual, and worthwhile?" "Is their quality in the important or quality in the trivial?"

Last spring I was in California, and my curiosity led me to take a day trip to Tijuana. By all assessments, it was a quality trip. Measurements would show that I arrived in Tijuana and returned to California on time. The tour bus was air-conditioned. My pre-arranged lunch was beautifully presented. I browsed through the shops and haggled over prices. All components of the trip were of high quality, the process was not flawed. I arrived home, however, disappointed. The disappointment was not in the process, but in the outcome and destination. The method and content were not at fault; it was the selection of an unworthwhile goal by an inexperienced traveler.

When my trip to Tijuana is compared against other trips to Tijuana, no doubt I enjoyed the highest quality for that experience — content validity — it might be called. When a trip to Tijuana, however, is compared against all of the other extraordinary places one might visit or sample in a lifetime, Tijuana was quality of a lower order experience. One might say that the criterion-related validity of the trip was in question.

As faculty, we must interface with the external environment, internal students, and things that we know about our fields to be worthwhile tour guides and mentors to the future. Again, we must not only look for quality in what we do, but ask the question, "Are we doing the right things?" Of all possible ends, which are most important? Do our programs have "content validity" and "criterion

validity?" To demonstrate quality in the trivial and the lower order will not suffice.

The tendency in curricular and program reform is to include everything that any one believes in order to avoid facing the difficult trade-offs and choices which must be made. In higher education, we must give more attention to the ends — which are not to be equated exclusively with content, and determine if there is hierarchy — vertical, and horizontal dimensions — in goals.

Health Professions

If assessment alone could improve our programs and bring about curricular reform, health professions education would be the model of emulation across undergraduate education. The American Medical Association and the American Osteopathic Association launched specialized accreditation at the turn of the century (Bogue, 1992, p. 36). The popularity of this type of assessment is demonstrated by the fact that the Committee on Allied Health and Accreditation of the American Medical Association now recognizes over 2,800 programs nationwide representing 26 occupations at over 1,500 institutions. Over 80,000 students are enrolled and over 30,000 students graduate annually from these programs. Additionally, many health care fields, such as pharmacy, nursing, and physical therapy, claim their own separate and influential accrediting bodies. Not only is program review and accreditation extensive in the health fields, practitioners at all levels are subject to national certification and/or state licensure examinations which measure individual competence.

The health fields are no doubt the leaders in specialized accreditation and the assessment of students. National certification and statewide licensure attest to the value added by health professions programs. It would be uncommon, if not totally unheard of, for an individual to challenge a licensure or certification examination and pass it without attending an accredited educational program.

Educational programs in the health fields demonstrate positive changes in the knowledge and skills of their graduates.

What then can we learn from the health fields? Technological proficiency may be taught and measured, and there can be extensive professional agreement upon specific skills and knowledge to be taught and learned. These findings were illustrated in a comprehensive study of student outcomes in nursing education at approximately 1,400 programs nationwide (Hart, 1988). Although knowledge, skill, attitude, and behavioral outcomes were all cited as important in nursing education, the actual concurrence and measurement of outcomes declined as one moved from knowledge to attitude outcomes. Thus, the curricular problems in the health fields are not unlike the curricular problems in other fields. While knowledge may be measured and clinical competence demonstrated, understanding and attitudinal changes may remain elusive. In the health professions, accreditation and licensure ensure that performance matches the professional practice as defined by the educators and professionals in the field. The programs reach the primary goal pursued, specialized competence.

Sadly, however, we learn from the health professions that the creation of a highly specialized health professional may not equate to a better individual, a better citizen, and a better overall profession. In Georgia, for example, we would not want our health professions programs judged solely on the basis of the health status of our people, the accessibility of care, affordability of care, or appropriateness of care — neither would inner city New York, the heart of New Orleans, or the poorer sections of Los Angeles.

We must ask the question, "If our health programs are of high quality and our graduates so proficient, why is the context for practice in such disarray?" There are those things beyond our control like the aging of the population, escalating insurance premiums, and fear of liability suits. We can state that our mission and goals are not to solve

the health problems of the population at large, but rather to train clinically competent, certification-eligible, licensure-ready practitioners prepared to treat patients. It is the same worthy goal shared by thousands of programs across the country. We train the student for the profession, but we do not educate the profession for the society.

If this statement is not true, how can a nation with one-half million physicians (DHHS, 1990), 1.6 million active registered nurses, 258,000 clinical laboratory technicians, 159,000 pharmacists, 88,000 physical therapists, 60,000 respiratory therapists and tens-of-thousands of other allied health workers deliver such quality care to some and no care to others (Morris, 1992)? How can terminal care grow to such gigantic proportions while preventive care be overlooked? Why is advanced technology so accessible and community care so remote?

We have taught and advanced a myopia which meets our definition of quality, satisfies our accrediting bodies, secures licensure for our students, certifies its graduates, and leaves the general public dissatisfied with our product overall. We have prepared graduates for the narrow profession and have not prepared the profession for the community. We must prepare students beyond technical competence to societal competence — for ethical decision-making and citizenship — helping them to recognize the social, cultural and political context within which they practice. Not all students will engage in this civic dialogue, but we must prepare students so those who will, can. And for those who will not, at least they will be aware.

The part which continues to challenge us is the whole. It is not in the individual parts that our educational system comes up short; it is in the overall plan. In baccalaureate degree terms, we succeed in the major, we fail in the general. As the health fields attest, it is not in teaching and measuring the technical skills — even those of the highest order — that challenges our system. It is in teaching and

measuring the general skills, the higher order skills, the concepts which define our humanity, examine our lives in community, and the responsibilities which attach to those relationships that our courses and curricula are challenged.

While the health professions may have failed to define and pursue quality broadly enough, industry also offers an example. Is technical expertise in building a car synonymous with quality in the education of an automobile engineer? If our students can build a truck, market a truck, and sell a truck — in fact sell five million of them — is that all they need to understand about trucks and the society? According to a Fulton county (GA) jury on February 5, 1993, the answer is no. Technical failures will no doubt occur in the design and use of a product; however, the jury awarded $101 million in punitive damages not because of technical failure in the product, but because some of the best and brightest of our graduates either refused to or could not separate the narrow skills of engineering, marketing, and profit, from the larger questions of public responsibility, personal responsibility, and life and death. If executives at General Motors kept hidden extensive knowledge of the potential life-threatening design failure in this truck, those graduates of higher education were party to either an ethical failure or an integration failure. Attention was to the process and not the range of potential outcomes. The process was deemed internally valid: it moved a profitable product to market. It was judged externally invalid, causing the people to speak.

The failure to receive a general education within a professional preparation context extends beyond health care and industry into one of the cornerstones of a free people — the field of journalism. How could well-educated journalists produce a simulated fiery car-truck collision and fail to tell the public that the truck had been tampered with to ensure dramatic results? This illustrates technical expertise functioning at its highest level in an ethical vacuum. Write a story, develop wonderful photo opportunities, tell

it on the national news to millions of people, and if part of the truth would denigrate the process, leave it out. I would hope the concept of "truth" would at some time be entertained in the video lab for future journalists.

Singular goals in education, accurately assessed, may demonstrate high quality in the lower order. We must define general and higher order skills, which in the words of Dr. Fincher, "Move students from knowledge, to comprehension, to understanding" (Fincher, 1987).

Recommendations

Finally, I offer five suggestions for improving quality in academic programs and strengthening the dimensions of specialization and general understanding.

1. We must reinstate the importance of general education and consider embedding it in the department. We must revisit the question of the ends of education and decide which outcomes of specialized competence are important. We must define general education, examine the functional arrangement of where and how it will be taught, and devise a system to assess the ends.

As cited earlier, the structural arrangements of higher education along with the vocational interests of students have been at play in eroding general education; however, we must acknowledge that specialization will not reverse, departments will not dissolve, and the majority of faculty will not become generalists. To effect change in the competencies of language, ethical decision-making, and citizenship will require redefining quality and determining where those ends may best be served considering current structures and resources.

The route to a renewal of general education will vary by college and university, but the course will remain as the primary vehicle of transmission. Rather than an integrated core or an enriched major, I would advocate a connected major where major programs are held responsible for

defining their student's professional competence, personal competence, and societal connections, and then assessing those competencies prior to graduation. Interest in general education by specialized faculty and career-oriented students will grow when students cannot exit the professional track without demonstrating general understanding in communication, ethical decision making, and societal awareness. A variety of structural arrangements may contribute to these ends, but the connected major will be responsible for validating their accomplishment. By using both summative and formative assessment within the major, more complete integration of professional knowledge and general knowledge should occur. We should make use of comprehensive examinations and checkpoints to see if value is added.

In *The Meaning of General Education*, Miller (1988) reminds us that general education is not a single structure, but rather it is self-conscious education, purposeful education, where the ends guide every aspect of the curriculum. As it now stands, only the specialized "ends" have a home; the general ends have no father or mother. General education is much like the Sears catalog — filled with selections, of long-standing tradition, where few people bother to shop.

2. Secondly, to improve the quality of higher education we must re-examine the relationship of professional competence and societal expectations. We must establish both the content validity and criterion-related validity of our programs.

Current licensure and certification examinations demonstrate the high concurrence of faculty and professionals on specialized knowledge and how to teach and measure it. For many fields, however, when our professions are measured against practical outcomes, societal expectations, and so-called external criteria, professional competence

does not translate to societal effectiveness. Our programs are low in criterion-related validity. The match between the role prepared for and the performance expected are at a wide variance.

We have effectively prepared the student for professional competence, but not for practice in a social context. In statistics, in the measurement of criterion-related validity, we ask, "How well does this test predict to some external variable or criteria?" In professional education, we should ask, "How well does this program prepare for societal performance?" Our programs then must be assessed not only for content validity, but criterion-related validity as well. The difficulty, of course, is in the criterion or defining the enlarged role.

3. Thirdly, only people can bring about change, and faculty are key in improving program quality.

We must eliminate the obstacles of faculty involvement in curricular planning. We must give release time from regular activities and reward their contributions. Is not a year of course revisions, interdisciplinary work, and defining a contemporary practitioner role equal to one or two refereed articles? And, at the risk of sounding anti-intellectual, if the well-educated public read some of the referred journals, the equation might be more like 1 to 10. The point is we must reward faculty who participate in improving the mission of teaching, and we should launch a bold faculty development effort to lead the process.

4. We must distinguish between program quality and faculty quality. They could be related — probably are — but are not synonymous.

A quality program will not exist in the absence of a committed, qualified faculty. However, a highly distinguished, published faculty — which consults more than it teaches, travels to conferences more than it holds office

hours, and grades students rather than teaches students — may only be neutral in contribution to program quality. We should not offer evidence that our faculty are of high quality as a substitute for demonstrating that our programs are of high quality. We cannot substitute faculty achievement for program achievement or student progress.

We must also come to terms with the missions of not only our colleges, our programs, and our students, but also our faculty. Our promotion policies and reward system should recognize the complexity and diversity needed in faculty bodies to create and maintain quality programs.

5. Finally, we must engage faculty in public service if we are to improve program quality.

The questions of ethical responsibility and contextual judgement are most easily seen and noted in the workplace setting. Each and all of our faculty would benefit by regularly visiting and working there, in order to better imagine the workplace, comprehend the stresses between product quality and profits, and understand the contemporary environment. The richness of learning for students and faculty in service is ensured because faculty will bring a conceptual framework and systematic inquiry to the most pressing of current problems and there is a texture and complexity in service that is difficult to simulate. Those faculty engaged in service will understand the importance of building the criterion-related validity of our programs. They will recognize important external criteria and societal competencies which should be integrated into education.

If research, with its narrow focus, is expected to contribute to better instruction, what could service with its interdisciplinary approach bring to teaching and learning? I would advance a reality that is often missing in our closed environments. Service brings to the forefront the question of what is important to know and do; it is the true test of utility.

In closing, I will borrow a line from Dr. Bogue and Saunder's (1992) book: to improve the quality of academic programs, "We must act on the possible, while awaiting perfection."

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Quality on Two Fronts: Undergraduate Education for the Future

Susan H. Frost
Ronald D. Simpson

Most critics of higher education declare that in America undergraduates lose. Instructors pay them little attention, and institutions slight their learning needs. Just when society demands *more* from each member of the work force, college is supplying less. These charges, ranging from Allan Bloom's widely read and damning *The Closing of the American Mind* to Derek Bok's more obscure and objective *Higher Learning*, are serious. Yet they present only part of the picture. To other creditable observers, American higher education exhibits evidence of the positive change typical of most thriving systems. Following a review of wide-ranging research findings and expert opinion and our own qualitative look at the experiences and opinions of higher education leaders, faculty, researchers, informed observers, and undergraduate students around the country, we find evidence of such change (Simpson & Frost, 1993).

This change is taking place on two important fronts. First, institutions are examining, and some are re-forming, the values that define their basic cores. Second, individuals are creating innovative, rich, and increasingly challenging learning opportunities for themselves. On these two fronts, the institutional and the individual, American higher learning is redefining itself — and not a semester too soon. Here we offer a brief summary of our views and a few predictions about undergraduate education for the future.

Institutional Progress: Rethinking Balances

According to Joab Thomas, president of Penn State University, (Simpson & Frost, 1993) those who work in university settings enjoy broad responsibility for advancing knowledge:

> Charged not only to teach individual students, but to learn for all of society, we have the opportunity to influence the future far more than many other institutions in our nation. . . . Each of these missions must pull its own weight if the university's potential is to be realized. (p. 343)

Thomas's vision of the university demands, as many recognize, a new balance of priorities. While continuing to support research, faculties might envision a new kind of teaching, one that will command both the energy and courage to not compromise what constitutes an educated person. Though it may be difficult, Thomas calls on the academy to remake teaching and learning in ways that measure up to the urgent needs of today's society.

Thomas's vision, both broader and sharper than previous views, is not mere rhetoric. It represents impressive efforts bring new balance to university teaching and research. Thomas and other leaders are departing from past patterns. They are not calling for quiet, campus-based movements at liberal arts colleges. As presidents and provosts of leading research universities, they are joining Thomas in publicly affirming the critical role of teaching.

Although this new tone is laudable, teaching will not be restored to a position of central importance until reward systems reflect the high status of teaching and value, in addition to traditional research, different kinds of scholarly achievement. Fortunately evidence suggests that some leaders are rethinking reward systems and joining together to bring about positive change. For example, Ernest Boyer (1990) recommends ways to achieve a new balance, and some faculties are giving attention to his ideas. Institutions are

funding efforts to improve the quality of instruction and providing for continued development for faculty. In 1993 the American Association for Higher Education brought together key leaders to discuss faculty roles and rewards (Conference on Faculty Roles and Rewards, Jan. 93). Balancing teaching with research was a central conference theme. For the first time in decades, teaching seems to be gaining importance in the academic hierarchy.

Not only is the relative importance of instruction beginning to change, but how teaching and learning take place is being redefined also. Traditionally, instructors have taken active roles while students have been more passive participants in the learning process. Now technological advances make possible new roles. Through technology students can access vast systems of information and new ways using knowledge. At the same time, classrooms are becoming only one of many places to learn, and time is becoming a student-controlled variable. In labs, homes, and dorm rooms, students access video, sound, data, and graphics at times that suit them. Rather than primarily disseminating knowledge in a classroom, future instructors will facilitate learning, over which students will have more control.

Another encouraging theme of institutional change concerns the way colleges and universities view the larger world. For years the academy and the curriculum focused inward, reflecting the orientation of the United States. Now as the country adopts more global views, institutions and curricula are changing to accommodate broad-based outlooks. Formerly, Western perspectives influenced our view of the world and defined most curricula. But new issues demand more inclusive learning agendas, and discipline-based courses of study that neglect broad outlooks are no longer sufficient. So faculties must address questions about the curriculum, and these issues will concern them for a number of years. We expect global, multicultural, and pluralistic perspectives to infuse all parts of the curriculum and foresee a time when programs of study may be

organized not around the disciplines but around other, more integrated schemes. Existing today as new paths to learning, special programs can become central components of future curricula. Now some students use them to create individual opportunities without waiting for curricular crises to be resolved.

Individual Opportunity: Progressive Paths to Learning

At the beginning of this decade, Martha Minow (1990), professor of law at Harvard University, outlined the trends and norms she expected to define the 1990s. Referring to the 1970s as the "me" generation and the 1980s as the "mean" generation, Minow proposed that the 1990s become the decade of distinction. For the phrase to be truly descriptive, neutrality, equality, and tolerance should define new norms for higher education: norms requiring individuals to consider the perspectives of others and acknowledge the limits of their own viewpoints, search for initially unknown perspectives and collaborate with others to disseminate them, and challenge the unstated norms of academic communities and understand what it takes to make others feel included.

Minow's views capture the essence of diversity, a dramatic new (or renewing) characteristic of higher education that is somewhat more evident when looking at groups of individuals than at groups of institutions. Although the system of American higher education developed around strong principles of diversity among institutions, today universities are more alike, and many colleges have come to resemble universities. A quick walk around any campus will, however, affirm anyone's hypothesis that student populations are changing in dramatic and exciting ways. Not only are American students more different from each other than ever before, students from all over the world are becoming commonplace even at the more provincial colleges.

As the within-group differences of once largely homogeneous student populations intensify, the varying histories and viewpoints of undergraduates emerge as a valuable source of strength to the academy. With different backgrounds, needs, and goals, students share a common purpose — learning — and this purpose can provide a route to understanding others, acknowledging their perspectives and the limits of our own, and finding ways to include all groups. On progressive campuses students are urged not to isolate themselves and seek the company only of others like them, but to get to know peers who are different; learn about perspectives they will encounter throughout their lives; and adopt personal attitudes that welcome difference. Students who use college as an opportunity to learn from students of other cultures can experience the power of Alexander Astin's (1993) newly reported findings: peers are the most influential component of the undergraduate experience. Not only in classrooms but in residence halls, dining facilities, and off-campus apartments and on athletic fields and jogging tracks, students are making profound differences in college for each other.

As those who work in campus life, support student leadership teams, or guide students as they volunteer in university communities know, the commitment and energy of individual students can lead to new opportunities for larger student populations. In similar ways individuals and small groups of students are making possible numerous changes in formal learning offerings from which larger groups may benefit. With increasing frequency, students are taking charge of their learning. They are recognizing opportunities, finding routes to access, and creating distinctive learning experiences. We applaud students who take the lead, create their futures, and foreshadow possibilities for the students who follow them. Discerning this new path a most exciting aspect of our study. Perhaps it is the most exciting consequence of diversity.

Many of the new learning paths we describe involve approaches that span the traditional disciplines and take advantage of interdisciplinary approaches, creative advising relationships, and special residence arrangements. These learning paths give students increased responsibility and offer teachers and students multidimensional ways to teach and learn. They should help students prepare for a future in which facts and methods become obsolete quickly and the need to understand the cultures and views of colleagues, customers, competitors, and neighbors is ongoing. The learning paths we describe were crafted not by award-winning students who received special permission to deviate from the normal curricula (Simpson & Frost, 1993). Students who are average in many ways crafted them. For example, a University of Rhode Island engineering student interned in Frankfurt, Germany and learned that, although people approach problem-solving in different ways, they can work for the same outcome. A Washington and Lee junior managed the $150,000 budget of a nationally visible mock political convention and learned to anticipate and prevent problems before they happened. A freshman at a large university did not find a timely fit in college. Rather than dropping out, he volunteered in nursing homes to "find somewhere that was real." Soon university life became real, and quite successful. Another student exchanged places with an Israeli counterpart and learned that naive trust in the American press, not reality, had defined her perspectives, and defined them erroneously. These students' experiences suggest that colleges and universities are altering the ways they relate to the world outside their walls and in the process, altering the quality of learning for students. The students we interviewed are taking control of at least part of their learning and creating unique experiences for themselves. Perhaps they foreshadow a time when colleges and universities will require all students to incorporate such experiences into their course of study.

Forecasting Change

What new directions do these institutional and individual themes foreshadow? Throughout this paper we have described ways in which individuals and institutions are changing. Now we question the meaning of such change. When considered collectively, they suggest that the academy is redefining itself in ways that have occurred only rarely in the past. Formerly students felt privileged to attend college, and faculties took pride in effective teaching. Then dedication to growth, research productivity, and technological advances overshadowed dedication to academic values. Now some academic leaders and students are reassessing basic questions about learning and its place in the academy. By pressing colleges and universities to redress their most basic commitments, individuals are influencing the culture of the academy.

Academic communities also are redressing their relationships to each other and to the larger world. Today, with broad segments of the population attending college, other questions about access are in order. Before students can take advantage of curricular innovations, special programs, or unique learning experiences, they must know about such opportunities and understand the processes that lead to participation. Then they and institutions must find ways to make such experiences not only affordable, but regular and expected parts of undergraduate learning.

Those who describe the global economy talk of linkages, and their term is most appropriate. It describes not only the alliances that define new societal norms but also the connections students need to survey opportunities and become involved if they so choose. In the larger world of work, such experiences will serve them well as they learn to examine options, discern meaning, make decisions, and become productive in tomorrow's environment.

Institutions, too, need linkages. Already some colleges and universities are working together and with business, government, and other education enterprises in ways not

considered possible in the past. As others adopt their views, opportunities for collaboration will increase. The most vital institutions will define and nurture linkages, thereby setting good examples for students and for society.

Moving Toward Responsibility

If these ideas converge on one concept, it is that of responsibility — for institutions and for individuals. Responsibility concerns learning and learning to learn. As institutional structures change to meet the new and different needs of students, the seat of responsibility for teaching and learning shifts. To benefit most from the new flexibility, students, with the help of knowledgeable people inside and outside the academy, must plan for their futures. Although colleges and universities tend toward sameness in global ways, within institutions students can enhance their learning and their futures by taking advantage of opportunities available on virtually every campus in America.

New concepts of responsibility are not limited to individuals. Institutions, too, are responsible for the outcomes of their efforts. In this context faculty members and administrators should consider rethinking the purposes of the academy and the place of higher education in society. Tough questions about balancing the elements of a liberal education with the needs of the marketplace, reconciling the Western view of civilization with more broad-based perspectives, valuing faculty talent in appropriate ways, and redistributing responsibility for learning must be addressed. Honesty will need to prevail as students, professors, administrators, and the public step forward to accept the terms of their responsibility. Many factors — economic, moral, cultural, political, and environmental — should contribute to the responsibility equation.

Institutional responsibility, as influenced by diversity and economics, is contributing to a new vision of higher education. No longer do bricks and mortar define the

academy; collections of knowledge are taking over. Of course, institutions still invest in buildings and books, but also they invest in students, faculty, ideas, networks, and collaborations. With shrinking resources, higher degrees of selectivity are required. Difficult choices will have to be made.

Unanswered Questions

The richest resources of America are found in its colleges and universities. Nowhere else does such a wealth of knowledge, experience, and energy exist; and nowhere else is this knowledge, experience, and energy so focused on enhancing the potential of others. Realizing this, important questions come to mind. Who are the caretakers of excellence in the academy? How will excellence be realized? Will the college educated lead America to new pinnacles of greatness, or will limited perspectives and resources confine us?

The question of excellence is a vital one for individuals and institutions to address. For enterprising students, the outlook is bright; they need not wait for institutions to point the way. Colleges and universities also have bright futures. Even in times of economic crisis, many are defining new paths to excellence. As these pathfinders intensify their efforts, other colleges and universities will join them.

The questions posed here have challenged America in the past, and they will continue to challenge society in the future. Fueled by a commitment to learning and belief in human potential, Americans have designed an unparalleled system of higher education. Now perhaps our most challenging question is, Why do we learn? To become clear-thinking, problem-solving individuals is only part of the answer. Coming to know oneself, believe in oneself, and approach the future in self-directed ways are other compelling reasons. There is, however, more. Dreaming, holding to ideals, and caring for all of society makes life even richer.

Collectively, higher education is America's greatest national treasure. Individually, higher education is our greatest investment. Although college enhances the potential of each student, college also prepares people to address the unpredictable questions of tomorrow. Remaining questions we leave unanswered. They serve as a summons for new challenges and new learning agendas. On many campuses, visionaries are addressing some of them. Others wait for today's college students to become the thinkers, parents, and leaders of tomorrow. Like those who have gone before them, they will conceive solutions and define new measures of excellence for higher education in America.

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After Quality, What Else?

Alton Taylor

The emphasis on quality education in American colleges and universities transcends several decades. Approaches to measuring quality are student grades, GPAs, post-graduation positions and status, follow-up surveys of graduates' opinions concerning their educational experiences and other student opinion polls. Institutional quality is judged by the percent of faculty with doctoral degrees, library holdings, teaching and research facilities, educational supplies, faculty reputations as distinguished teachers and grants obtained and other ratings of the educational environment which support meaningful and effective teaching and learning. Student attributes of SAT and ACT scores, graduation rank from high school, school leadership activities, and other features are used in rating the quality or prestige of colleges and universities. In addition to the public approaches to judging quality in colleges and universities, there are also state, federal, and regional accreditation routine visits and reports that describe institutional purposes, achievements, and plans.

Strong academic departments consistently acknowledge the importance of quality programs. Serious questions about academic program purposes and intended achievements are on the minds of devoted, effective faculty. Questions are raised on a regular basis pertaining to program purposes, whether the right faculty are employed, whether the courses are taught effectively, whether the students are learning the desired knowledge, whether faculty are satisfied with their students' learning and growth, and whether students are satisfied with the academic program experience. Quality improvement in the academic sense pervades

good colleges and universities. With the advent of the Total Quality Management approach to higher education, the directive and corrective approach used by vendors, both within and outside the institutions, reflects the lack of substantive academic mindsets and processes to establish quality in academe. Attempts to adopt TQM are increasing, with more institutions conducting workshops for their staffs, cross-training between persons and offices, acknowledging continuous improvement in the work setting, and revising standards of accountability (Sherr and Teeter, 1991). While some reports describe TQM in academic processes, little and inadequate documentation seems to indicate any broad, comprehensive commitment to TQM by faculty, alumni, students, trustees, or institutional researchers.

A major concern of serious academics is the cheerleading approach to involvement with quality improvement. Faculty and staff are simply instructed to jump in, no questions to be asked, and any reluctance to comply is judged as a resistance to desired change or, more often, as a recalcitrant, non-team member. While support offices in the areas of facilities, finance, printing, transportation administration and the like are oftentimes where TQM is more readily accepted and implemented, these areas are where rules, standards, and guidelines determine how, when and by whom a job should be done. But in the areas of teaching and research where faculty are the sole providers, TQM faces a much more difficult time. Several reasons exist for the difficulty of adopting TQM in the teaching and scholarship arenas. Three of these reasons are about trust, questioning and motivation.

Trust is one of the requisite conditions for successful adoption of TQM. Cornesky and others (1992) state that fear must be removed from the work setting so employees can work constructively, and establishing trust is accomplished by administrators through positioning, confidence, and respect. Furthermore, they report that

the establishment of trust must not be dependent on time but is dependent on results based on long-term relationships that establish quality (p. 103). The problem of getting faculty to accept the principles of TQM without questions or motivations may be glossed over by over zealous advocates. TQM advocates who assume that trust is a precondition that faculty will accept without notice, reflection and conviction, are sorely missing the point of academic work. Trust is not taken lightly by faculty idealists whose value of knowledge, teaching and research is far reaching and fundamental to the very core of their academic and personal lives. Also, trust can't be administered or regulated similar to conformity to rules, membership on a team, or other tactics used by high level administrators whose goal is to get work done quickly and by the rules. People who cause problems of mistrust are oftentimes those in control, and in many instances are now in positions where they are expected to create trust with and among faculty, thus, a further glorification of the process.

The ultimate test for quality is found in the procedures through which it works. It is not enough merely to understand the checklist for identifying quality improvement and join the TQM group, unless some convincing evidence that a specified, identifiable problem exists. There are people employed in colleges and universities who are committed to every suggestion that comes down the hierarchy and content to simply be in the administration. Without some facts and informed judgements about the nature of a problem — what is going on in comparison to what should be; where the problem is happening; when it became noticeable; the extent to which it exists; and what the probable cause and some alternatives for solution are — can an institutional response be marshalled and committed faculty be brought together to work for corrective actions? Quality cannot be prescribed, defined or institutionalized without a selection of facts and selective judgements that define and conceptualize its ultimate purpose.

By the very nature of graduate training of faculty at the doctoral level, one is disciplined to raise *questions* in pursuit of the discovery of knowledge. Effective performance in the classroom also requires flexibility and spontaneity when the faculty persists with inquiring instructional techniques. Advising students rests upon questioning and hard thinking to provide helpful suggestions for fulfilling degree requirements and post-graduation pursuits. Research endeavors require disciplined, informed, intellectual, and rigorous questioning. Faculty are educated and employed for their inquisitive strengths, yet TQM requires that this mental approach be replaced with a team, cooperative, complying behavior directed by a nonacademic administrator who is removed from the immediacy of academic processes and work of the classroom, lab and library.

Motivation is structured in TQM by important rituals and ceremonies held on an annual basis. Top administrators are urged to give awards, plaques, certificates and the like to recognize outstanding service and performance. Yet seemingly, financial rewards are not to be considered as a method to motivate workers to do quality work. "Merit pay is an inexpensive way of getting everyone in the organization mad at each other" (Cornesky et al., 1992, p.43). Faculty are motivated through peer recognition when they do an exemplary job in the classroom judged as meritorious for teaching awards by their students and their colleagues.

Faculty are motivated to do quality research when their projects are funded as a result of positive peer reviews. Faculty are motivated to do quality scholarship when their articles are accepted by refereed journals. Peer recognition is the cornerstone of motivation for faculty. Faculty are professionals who take great pride in doing good work for the sake of discovery, and knowing and being valued as one who does good research. Moreover, faculty members accept praise (awards) or criticism as meaningful when it comes from someone who is academically legitimate or understands what is being achieved. Personal motivation

is very subtle and difficult to initiate and sustain because academic mindsets select some realities and disregard others without pronouncements of institutional allegiance and devotion.

In concluding, quality improvement is an acknowledged part of higher education but takes different shapes between the academic and nonacademic dimensions of colleges and universities. In the non-academic world "customers" are more readily identifiable and "customer satisfaction" is more readily recorded than in the academic arena. Accountability of academic purposes and achievements is markedly different from the non-academic units in terms of measurement and evaluation processes and policies. Enthusiasm and risk for accepting new management approaches are more feasible in a bureaucracy than the independent, spirited and inquisitive scholar's world.

There will be more team approaches to decision making in all groups and more frequent reminders of institutional commitments to quality in our work setting. The biggest challenge to continuous quality work is for the academic mindset to articulate clearly and convincingly to the internal administration and the external publics why the search for knowledge is necessary to the very survival of our way of life. These internal and external constituencies need to understand that the search for, and the dissemination and application of knowledge is a fragile and essential part of individual and social good. The final challenge to the argument for continuous quality in higher education is weakened primarily by the faltering economy and a lack of public confidence in the value of higher education in obtaining jobs and solving social problems. The lack of financial support and public confidence does not motivate faculty to increase quality, much less increase productivity as defined by the policy makers at institutional and state levels.

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Quality and Diversity: The Mystique of Process

Cameron Fincher

Many years ago, in a paper on "the demise of administrative mystique," one of us[1] welcomed the adoption of management concepts and methods because our colleges and universities had outgrown the paternalistic bureaucracy that was characteristic of the 1950s. Bureaucratic notions of work experience, time-in-rank, and institutional allegiance had been an improvement over the benevolent autocracy of former years, but continued growth and development in higher education required more efficient ways of enrolling students, scheduling classes, reporting grades — and distributing paychecks.

Efficiency, as well as experience, was increasingly important, and the replacement of data processing equipment (using punch-cards) with such technological marvels as computers using magnetic tape and disks for storing and retrieving data was a model of efficiency for most institutions and organizations. In the adoption of modern management, accounting, and business systems there was the promise of more "openness" in administrative decision making — and proof that the institutional budget was no longer located "in the president's hip pocket."

The advent of "the management revolution" in higher education, welcome though it was, quickly gave evidence of substituting technique for experience — and some of us were concerned that management concepts and principles would create their own mystique. The advocacy of systems analysis, PPBS, MBO, ZBB, and total information systems did indeed spur an inordinate concern with technique at a

time when institutions were under great pressure to: (1) improve their effectiveness, as well as efficiency; (2) achieve excellence, as well as equal educational opportunities for all participants; and (3) operate on a principle of shared authority, as well as implement effectively policy decision that were increasingly centralized. Among the buzz words of the day were financial crunch, mismanagement, cost/effectiveness, cost/benefits analysis, and computer modeling.

Management-by-technique

A "natural history" of the management revolution in higher education would disclose the numerous inconsistencies and contradictions we must deal with in academe. Our "national character" is much in evidence as we seek the best of both worlds whenever we are confronted with difficult choices — *or* forced to make decisions under conditions of uncertainty — *or* asked to define alternatives that require some sense of order (or priority) in attaining. In more ways than we care to count, we are the more rational and conservative of all societal institutions, but we are subject to fads and fashions that often border on the foolish. Cynics may rightly suspect that "the bigger we are, the harder we fall."

Since the 1950s we have witnessed many fads in institutional management, planning, evaluation, and assessment. If we examine closely their arrival and departure, we can detect several major trends in the shifting of thought and discussion:

1. In the shift *from experience to technique* we saw the triumph of management-by-technique, as PPBS was mandated in the 1960s for agencies of federal government and others followed (or thought they were following) their lead;
2. In the 1970s we were the designated beneficiaries of zero-based budgeting and management-by-objectives; we also listened to a great deal of rhetoric

about shared authority and participative decision making while funding agencies required management, planning, and evaluation in all projects and programs;

3. By the 1980s we witnessed a shift *from technique to style*: we heard more and more about strategic planning and leadership styles; "a great communicator" occupied the White House and many other presidents gave "wonderful speeches" in which they "marketed the university;" some may have been "hired" or "fired" by the way in which they handled sixty-second statements on evening newscasts;
4. during the 1980s, however, *style was rapidly becoming process*; in the latter phase, a technocratic bureaucracy superceded paternalistic and benign bureaucracies we had known in the past; administrivia reached an all-time high with desktop computers (with dot-matrix printers), the cellular telephone and the FAX machine; no one bothered about the declining quality of written communications;
5. in the 1990s, leadership in higher education has become increasingly passive, as governors and national commissions serve as major spokesmen on educational issues and needs.

The Mystique of the 1990s

Throughout the years in which we ricocheted from experience to technique to style to process, we witnessed the interplay of other opposing tendencies that are characteristic of our national character — and we endowed each new "solution to our problems" with a mystique that does not speak well of our reputations as scholars, scientists, and specialists in advanced fields of higher learning.

Among the opposing tendencies clearly evident in national and discussion are: (a) our difficulties in distinguishing between *efficiency* and *effectiveness* in institutions of higher learning; (b) our continuing search for *excellence*

and *equity* in education at all levels; (c) our inconsistencies of *centralization* and *decentralization* in the administration, management, and governance of universities; and (d) our failure to appreciate the *centripetal* and *centrifugal* forces that are evident in the various educational programs and services we provide.

In our more fanciful moments we can imagine a special law of complementarity and believe that by the rapid alternation of attention to opposing tendencies, we will eventually reach the desirable ends of both. In each of these we seemingly act on a premise of, "First one, then the other" and we often contradict ourselves by assuming that whatever the agenda of the day, it will serve as a precedent (if not a permanent solution) for solving our problems. Once convinced that we have solved a problem, we endow the solution with a mystique as "a general and necessary solution" and we fail to recognize the same problem or its solution when it occurs again in a few short years.

Most of all, we fail to recognize that in vital and self-organizing institutions pulsation is our best proof that institutions are living, breathing, maturing entities with many organismic features. Indeed, intake and outcome, expansion and contraction, differentiation and integration, are their most distinctive and common characteristics.

THUS, in much of what we observe in 1993, we can see satisfactory solutions that have become irritating problems — and we can see perennial problems that are like "existential dilemmas;" our solutions will always be momentary and the best we can do is "to cope." We can observe such problems in whatever concerns may be addressed in the advocacy of "Total Quality Management" and the rhetoric of multipluralism.

The Mystique of TQM

In "Total Quality Management" we supposedly have an active concern with inputs, process, and outcomes — but we should ask if we are not returning to *process* after

an excessive concern with results (that we could not define and assess, as well as our critics expected). And in the acceptance of another catchy acronym, are we not contributing to a mystique of management-by-process? Indeed, at least one of us is amazed that TQM is not "Total Process Management." We are told that TQM includes all phases of design, development, production, and marketing, and we have known for years that many jobs can be enriched by the involvement of employees in the different phases of production.

We are not told, however, how dysfunctional "process" can become when it is carried to extremes. Behavior and beliefs do indeed become stereotyped, even superstitious, when process becomes the objective of specific functions and activities. We are reminded of wasps who are compelled to go through their ritual of attack-and-sting, even though a spider may be presented to them dead and ready to be eaten. Many faculty committees, when enamored with process, become captives of their own deliberations and will often delay or procrastinate in the name of established guidelines. More often than not, the charges to faculty committees (and the procedures being followed) permit far more discretion than committee members are willing to take. Some faculty members continue to attack-and-sting long after an issue is dead.

Before embracing TQM, some of us would hope that someone (with experience and detachment) could answer the following questions:

1. Is there anything to TQM other than another overly publicized effort to solve difficult problems with aphorisms and anecdotes; should we not remember the lesson of Lee Iaccoca and Frank Borman, one a "charismatic" executive who "managed by walking about" on television and the other a heroic astronault who could not "earn his wings every day" because he lacked charisma?

2. Is TQM a brand name like "Kleenex" that is grossly unfair to many others selling the same product? Or, is it a "new nomenclature for planning, management, and assessment concepts with which institutional leaders should be quite familiar?
3. How does *it* relate to participative management, as advocated since the early 1970s?
4. How does it differ from other management concepts and principles encouraging planning, goal-setting, assessment, and feedback — and as those concepts have been advocated and promoted?
5. Why the mystique of "total quality" when: (a) "downsizing" in industry and business is the means to payroll reduction — and it may be no more than a cynical way of increasing profits by manipulating productivity figures? (b) we are never told how "restructuring" differs from re-organization, reform, and other perfectly usable terms in the English language?
6. What is the relevance of TQM for the improvement of learning and teaching?
7. If concepts of "Total Quality Management" are to be used in higher education, would they not serve better if they were applicable to large-scale systems, the global environment, or the "Spaceship Earth?"
8. And where are the concepts that enlighten our comprehension of: (a) human capabilities, and their limitations as well as their potential? (b) the non-renewable resources needed in production and distribution of goods and services, as well as the renewable resources within society? and (c) the basic fact-of-life in self-organizing systems that alterations in one component of the larger system may have unanticipated and undesirable effects in other components?

To a great extent, TQM is a shameful distraction to the issues and concerns discussed by Grady Bogue[2] in his book,

The Evidence of Quality. Bogue asks specifically if quality is, "purchased at the expense of other principles important to American higher education — access, equity, autonomy, diversity — or does it enrich and support these principles?" Skeptics must surely ask if quality is on a collision course with such principles — especially diversity!

The Mystique of Diversity

In higher education diversity has a special mystique. Many of us have often spoken or written of diversity as the major strength of our institutions, their programs and services, and their resources, talents, and expertise. On occasion we regard diversity in society as ensuring open, divergent pathways to common goals or objectives of comparable quality. And over the past twenty years we have read much about institutions of higher learning *with* pluralistic constituencies — and diverse programs, services, and activities.

More recently diversity has become a code word for the resolution of complex issues in sociocultural values (where conflict has long been evident). We also hear diversity used as a moral solution to societal problems; in such cases, the term is used with an overtone of moral certainty, subjective certitude, and righteous indignation. If we listen carefully, we can be transported back to the 1960s when the intensity of a belief was assumed to be its validity. For examples: (a) When we feel so intensely about a belief, doesn't that lend credence, if not utility, to our belief? and (b) Where there is moral certainty, should there not be a stronger commitment to the values implicit in the belief?

In brief, we have in diversity a word that was once used in "good conjunction" with pluralism — and in higher education we undoubtedly have the most diverse system of any nation on earth. In the 1990s, nonetheless, we use the word diversity in confusing and misleading ways. If

the term means a desirable degree of cultural diversity, with recognition that other cultures have much to offer in a pluralistic society — such usage implies a national need to extend and broaden curricular offerings, the necessity of learning more about other nationalities, traditions, and customs, *and* the interdependence of the world's people in a global environment.

If, however, diversity has become a code word for the equality or basic identity of cultural values, it implies that the validity and utility of cultural values are equivalent and must be accorded equal respect. Thus, it is ironical that diversity is now an objective we should pursue in the name of multipluralism. To some critics, our institutions, programs, and services are not diverse enough; our students and faculties are not diverse enough; and we will forego all entitlements to the 21st century if we do not diversify further. In a more realistic sense, diversity has become a word with no "common" meaning or significance. We must wonder if some advocates do not use the term in substitute of the phrase, "turn-about is fair play;" some usages suggest a denigration of western civilization in all matters pertaining to cultural differences. To some proponents, cultural diversity can be obtained only through the admission of more students from non-western cultures and the appointment of more faculty members who are representative of the various nations, societies, and subcultures in our global economy.

Much to our embarrassment, no one has norms, standards, or criteria whereby minimal, typical, optimal, or reasonable diversity can be recognized once it has been achieved. Advocates of diversity are like the labor leader who was asked, "What does organized labor want?" His reply was, "Ten percent more!" If we can assume that the labor leader was talking about wages, we cannot make a similar assumption about educational outcomes and rewards. We can infer, however, that some advocates are

talking about "a fair share" of educational benefits, about an undefined equity in access, opportunity, and outcomes. If they are, our quest for diversity will be more challenging than we recognize. Some proponents, it would appear, are unduly militant and their meaning of diversity may be "our turn to dispense advantages, rewards, and benefits." If this inference is correct, we can expect an intensification of frustration in our institutions of higher education and more displaced aggression against the intellectual and cultural values that have sustained universities since the 17th century.

Where does Quality *and* Diversity Lead?

In an open, voluntary, multipluralistic society where does the simultaneous pursuit of *quality* and *diversity* take us? In what ways does the interplay between two apparently opposite tendencies differ from the related issues of effectiveness versus efficiency, and excellence versus equity?

In the interactions of quality and diversity — as educational values or principles, and as they are currently discussed — we have the kind of issue we should be quite familiar with; we are again pursuing different goals or objectives simultaneously without appropriate attention to their inconsistencies. We also may have conflict in the possibility that neither quality nor diversity — as social goals — are deeply engrained in the American national character. Thus, we are much too passive in supposing that the issues of quality and diversity will be resolved by others, such as federal courts, state legislatures, national commissions, accrediting associations, or various funding agencies.

The difficulties in higher education begin with our confused definitions and our lack of adequate norms, standards, and criteria in addressing our national need to improve education at all levels. The difficulties are compounded by the multiple, not-always-compatible purposes of higher education and our lack of confidence in the

educational outcomes we can measure, assess, or evaluate for purposes of improvement, renewal, or reform.[3]

In the dissemination of knowledge we defer to the authority and responsibility of classroom instructors, basing our judgment of teaching qualifications and effectiveness almost entirely on the academic credentials of individuals. Should we take seriously public demands of the evaluation of teaching effectiveness, many academic department heads would not know where to begin. Just as faculty members have been appointed on grounds other than their teaching, so have administrators been chosen for reasons other than their ability to assess, evaluate, and make sound judgments concerning teaching and learning. As a result, we leave the evaluation of student learning entirely to classroom instructors and we assume that deans and department heads know who their best teachers are.

To free ourselves from the "mystique of process" into which many colleges and universities have slipped, we should examine carefully the internal inconsistencies of quality and diversity — and we should not accept invitations to debates in which we should not be drawn. Institutions of higher education can assist society and state in solving many problems, but they cannot solve social, legal, political, or economic problems that state and society are unwilling to solve. Given such possibilities, are the following conclusions not in order?

1. To diversify further our programs, services, and activities, we must have sound educational reasons — and *not* merely social, legal or political reasons — for doing so;
2. To serve the rapidly expanding needs of our increasingly pluralistic society, we must receive better guidance and assistance from state and society — and from our multiple constituencies; the educational cake of advantages and benefits cannot divided fairly, if it must be divided incessantly;

3. To improve the quality of learning and teaching in our schools and colleges: (a) we must begin where we are — and work with what we have; (b) we must reaffirm and declare often that the *cultivation* of human minds and character is our primary responsibility; and (c) we must recognize that the range and complexity of our attitudes, beliefs, and values require a unifying core of beliefs and values *and* a viable code of ethics and morality that extends to all participants and constituencies!
4. And throughout all efforts to achieve quality, or any other educational goal, we must recognize that educational outcomes are: (a) public, as well as private; (b) societal, as well as individual; and (c) eventual or deferred, as well as immediate and direct. In such outcomes, the public interest is a matter of pervasive importance. Whatever else education may be, it is an investment in the future and dividends will be paid to generations that will be born in another decade, in another century.

Footnotes

[1]Cameron Fincher, "The Demise of Administrative Mystique" (*Intellect*, May 1973, pp. 499-501).

[2]Grady Bogue & Robert L. Saunders, *The Evidence for Quality: Strengthening the Tests for Administrative and Institutional Effectiveness* (Jossey-Bass, 1992).

[3]See *Assessment, Improvement, and Cooperation: The Challenge of Reform in Higher Education* (Institute of Higher Education, University of Georgia, 1991).

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